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By-Paths *in* Collecting



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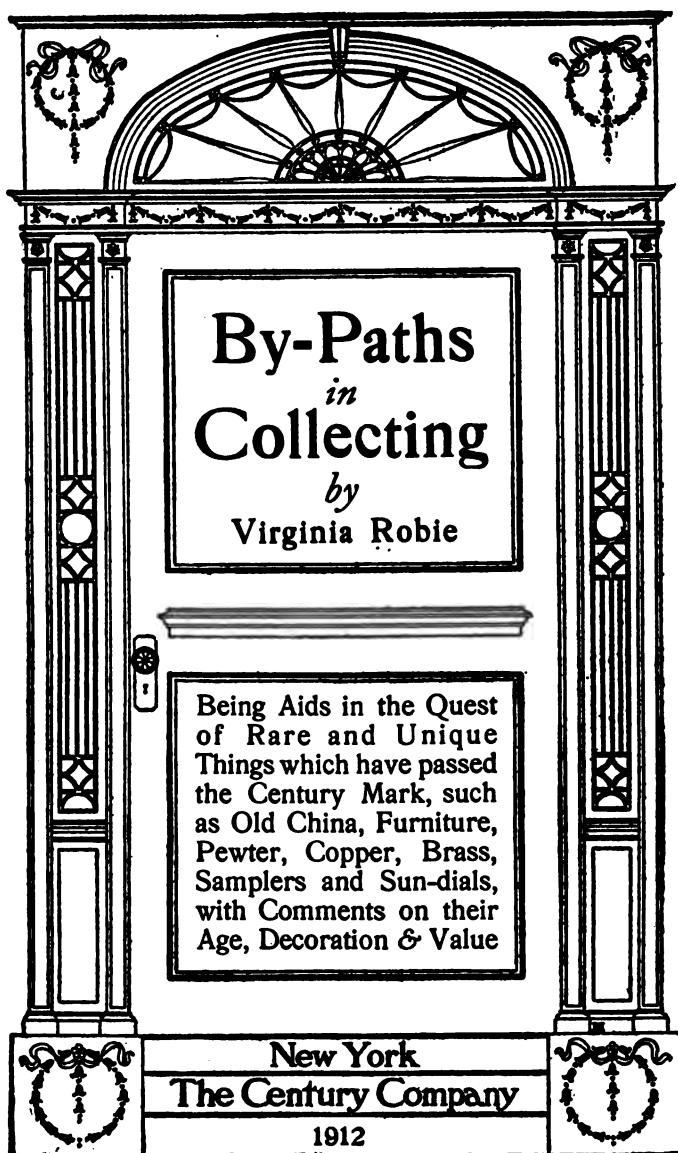
By-Paths in Collecting





The Band-Box Shop





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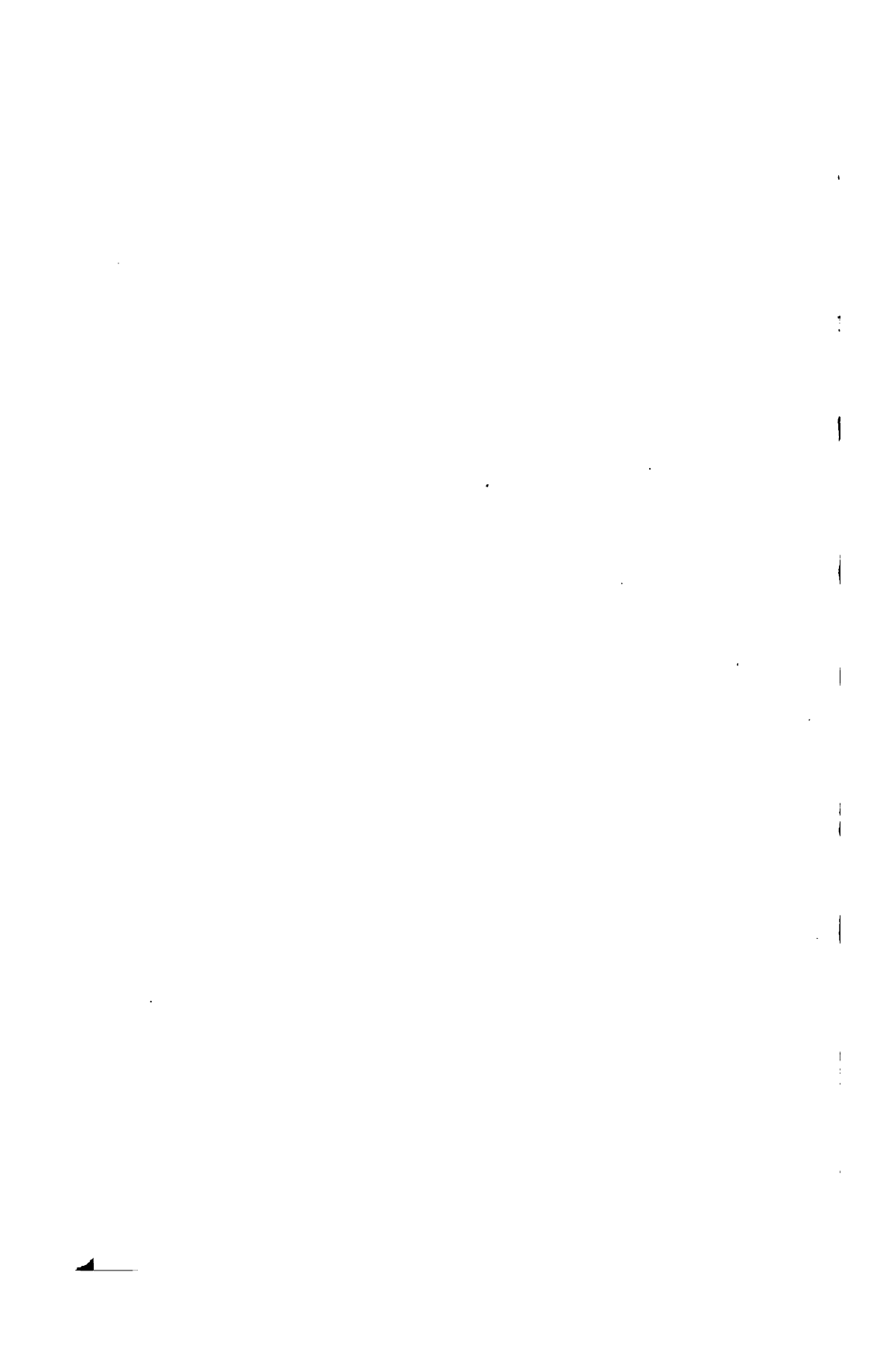
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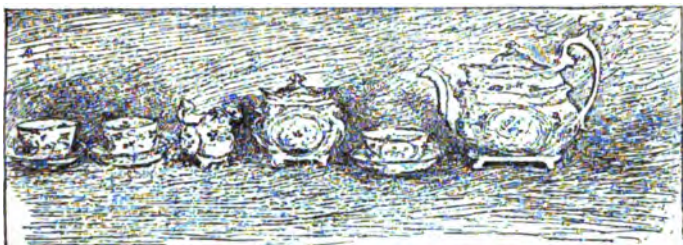
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By-Paths in Collecting



By-Paths in Collecting

CHAPTER I

STAFFORDSHIRE LANES

IN china collecting there are many byways and highways, little paths, as it were, off the beaten track, where it is profitable to wander if one has time—time, mark you, not money. “Pink Staffordshire” is a sign-post leading to a pleasant byway—somewhat narrow, but well worth exploring. It will be useless to look for it near city streets, for its boundary lines are quiet country roads and out of the way places.

If you are looking for rare cabinet articles or for specimens which auctioneers call “museum pieces” you would better choose a more frequented thoroughfare, for no great finds will reward you in Pink Staffordshire Lane, but if you are seeking something quaint and lovable, something for a vacant

BY-PATHS IN COLLECTING

spot in a corner cupboard, or to place next a pewter mug, then you will be well rewarded in forsaking the main traveled roads of collecting for a little while.

Pink Staffordshire does not belong to the aristocracy of china, in fact, it is not china at all, but dear, plebeian crockery of English parentage, like its celebrated blue kinsman. In decorative importance it cannot rank with the blue ware, yet the shapes are attractive with enough color value never to be insipid. It is on more friendly terms with other things than blue Staffordshire, combining well with copper and silver lusters and being especially harmonious with pewter. Of special interest are the long, low teapots, sugar-bowls, and creamers which have decided grace of outline.

Blue Staffordshire is sufficient unto itself and quarrels a bit with other things, but pink is entirely amiable with all sorts of surroundings. For actual use, a pink Staffordshire teapot is admirable and does not make the tea seem of secondary importance as will invariably a blue pot. The difference in price is also worth mentioning. Do not, however, think this ware is easy to find—on the contrary, it is often harder to locate than blue Staffordshire. It has not been so well taken care of for one thing,



Built-in cupboard in the "Gilman Manse," Yarmouth, Maine, containing old Staffordshire, now the property of Arthur E. Marks, Esq.

STAFFORDSHIRE LANES

and being a little later in date belongs to a period which cannot by the greatest stretch of imagination be called Colonial, and therefore long neglected.

The decorations are harder to classify than those on the better known blue ware. No one, as yet, has taken the trouble to list them nor to pay any great attention to them. Many articles have no mark and the "borders" are not easily identified, as in the case with those found on Staffordshire of an earlier period. The pink pieces were made at a time when the American demand for English tableware was declining, and few of the subjects, comparatively speaking, relate to American scenes and events. English scenes and "made up" views are found, also pastoral pictures with cows, sheep, and occasionally figures. Flowers play a prominent part in many pieces and are usually well executed. Turner's views are occasionally found on plates and tea services, and are among the best of pink prints. The tone varies from true pink to lilac, the latter, a charming color, which, however, must not be confused with "mulberry," an entirely different tone and in fact an entirely different ware.

"Mulberry ware" is a thick kind of crockery with purplish brown decorations—extremely decorative and worthy of more attention than it has received.

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A dining-room is recalled hung in yellow and having for woodwork dark English oak with furniture to correspond, where a great quantity of mulberry is most effectively shown. No other china is in view and the plates, large and extremely decorative, fill the entire plate rail. The remainder of the set occupies two built-in cupboards, the middle shelf of one holding a huge tureen. The pieces form both a dinner and a tea service and have been in the family for years. Thomas Mayer was the maker, a well known name in pottery annals. Another room of tan and light brown coloring has only pink ware—and is as successful in its way as the mulberry room, both being agreeable changes from the usual dining-room displays of blue china.

The Richard Jordan plate made by Heath is printed in pink as well as other colors, and the rare Hancock plate by Jackson is also found in that tone. There are a pink "Millennium" and a "Montivedio" and the list could be extended considerably if famous blue pieces did not thrust themselves in one's face at the mere word—"historical."

Pink historical pieces do not charm, however, in the same way that deep blue specimens do. Far more fascinating are the characteristic patterns of flowers and made up views which show oftentimes a naïve



Pink Staffordshire in characteristic decoration

STAFFORDSHIRE LANES

fancy on the part of the potter. English cottages and details from Chinese porcelain are sometimes mingled in defiance of geography and truth. One pattern is known to several collections as "The Stag, and the Lady Jumping Rope," an amusing decoration of a very spirited maiden in an 1830 bonnet jumping rope, and at her side and apparently with little connection with the episode, a stag with antlers like the branches of a tree. The decoration is a charming shade of deep rose and is depicted on a tea-set, two vegetable dishes, used now for fruit, and on plates of three sizes. It is not unlike in general character a good deal of Staffordshire of the light blue, brown and black varieties.

Dillon is a fairly well known English potter, whose name is occasionally found on pink ware, and there are others, better known, whose work is well worth owning. Finding pink Staffordshire, like all other china things, is largely a matter of chance. Old New England farm-houses shelter a good deal. It was a favorite kind for "company china" in the forties, and company china then, as now, had careful usage. Many buyers, especially dealers, have passed it by on account of its supposedly unsalable qualities. Writers on old china have frequently described it as being uninteresting—contrasting its

BY-PATHS IN COLLECTING

delicacy with the vivid beauty of deep blue Staffordshire, which in point of color it cannot approach.

If a china collection is an investment, a speculation, pink Staffordshire is not a particularly wise purchase. Ten years from now it will probably be worth just what it is to-day—except that all old things will then be a little older and a little harder to find. It will not increase in value as will certain wares which are always in demand, and if one wished to dispose of it at once at a “forced sale” it would probably bring about half what one paid for it. But we do not all buy china with the money viewpoint visible. Some of us buy because we cannot help it, others because we like certain things, considering that reason enough—as it certainly is. With hobbies there should not be too much rhyme and reason else they would cease to be hobbies.

Eugene Field once said that he never started forth with the intention of buying shoes that he did not meet some one on the way who told him about an edition of Horace which some one else wanted to sell. The shoes were consequently left to the imagination. Only those who have a china bump highly developed know the compromises with conscience over what one wants and what one needs.

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And if the need be a pair of boots, and the wish an old pink Staffordshire teapot, it will be a decided saving, *in the beginning* to buy the teapot—for its value, commercially speaking, is less than the boots, but the old pink teapot soon needs a companion piece in the way of a creamer, the creamer suggests the advisability of finding a sugar-bowl, and the three pieces together seem painfully bare without a few pink plates for a background. The plates acquired, the shelf whereon they are placed is found to be too small, and a corner cupboard appears to be the only solution of the problem. But the half dozen or so pieces do not fill the cupboard; a mug is needed for the top shelf, also a pitcher or two, and a pepper-box. The center shelf calls for more than three plates to properly display the tea-set, and the lower shelf is still vacant. Other things can be used, for, as has been said, this is a friendly ware, but the devious byway of "Pink Staffordshire" has become too fascinating—and pink Staffordshire it is until the cupboard is filled. So after all, the buying of the teapot cannot be viewed in the light of an economical transaction. But china hobbies cannot be taken too seriously and the pleasure they give must be their own justification.

Light blue china has never shared the popularity

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of dark blue wares, and at one time it was the custom to scorn everything that was pale in hue. Light Staffordshire, Willow ware, even old Canton, were passed over as uninteresting and declared to be lacking in decorative effect. Time adjusts many things and now many of the despised dishes are much in demand.

Light blue Staffordshire is not so easily catalogued as Canton. It is of all kinds and types and is sometimes of real beauty and again of slight interest. One thing may be said of it; even when the decoration is undeniably "pale" the shapes are charming. No matter what the style, the outlines are invariably beautiful. During the light blue period a change took place in designing. The low teapots, creamers and sugar-bowls, many of them following closely on the designs used by silver-smiths, were replaced by tall, slender patterns. Both types may be found in light blue and it is possible to tell approximately the date of a piece by its low or high lines. The tall teapots are accompanied by equally tall sugar-bowls and creamers, and form a decided contrast to the earlier types.

A few historical designs are found in this tone, among the number being the "Anti-Slavery" plate, "Texan Campaign," and several of Ridgway's lesser



Fine specimens of Mulberry ware, owned by Mrs. Harlan Creelman,
Auburn, N. Y.

STAFFORDSHIRE LANES

known pieces, among which may be mentioned "Capitol Heights" and "Kosciusko's Tomb." Many unmarked pieces are in existence, and in a separate class are those marked with initials. Whereas the light blue ware is of later date than the dark, medium blue is of an earlier period and contains many attractive patterns.

Not long ago a portion of a dinner set printed in palest blue and with little interest of any kind was sold from a dusty, musty little antique shop on Cape Cod for a hundred and fifty dollars. For several years it had occupied a high shelf in company with several broken-down articles awaiting mending. One day when the summer season was nearly over a belated traveler chanced to enter the shop. No one was in attendance, and it would have been an easy matter to have carried off a beautiful copper luster pitcher bearing a picture of the surrender of Cornwallis, a fine "Boston State House" plate, or a "City of Albany" platter. In "Cape" fashion, the owner had left the door unlocked, and, not looking for customers, had gone to a neighboring town. But the man—for this is a man's story—had no eyes for the luster nor for the valuable historical blue pieces. In course of investigation he had spied a pale blue gravy-boat

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which riveted his attention. It was the exact counterpart of one his mother had used when he was a boy. On further inspection a vegetable dish was located, identical in outline and color with one stored away somewhere in his memory. Plates also came to view and a small pitcher. Trains were forgotten in a decision to buy the china. Knowing nothing of such matters, he was an easy prey of the discerning old dealer, who returning later in the day realized an unusual opportunity.

In a well-known shop not more than a half dozen blocks from his city house within a thousand miles of Boston are two plates marked "one dollar" each. They bear the same decoration of small trees and insignificant pagodas, and the color is equally pale and lifeless. But a kind fate, kinder than is usual in china matters, has never brought the fact to the man's notice, and to-day, within the confines of a specially designed cabinet, the Cape Cod pieces look forth on a sumptuously furnished dining-room. If there is any truth in china chat they must say several things relative to dusty shelves and a sea atmosphere. This is truly one instance where pale blue Staffordshire was appreciated. But such happenings are infrequent, and in the interests of true collecting it is quite as well.



Staffordshire platter



Sometimes the central picture has the quality of an engraving

STAFFORDSHIRE LANES

Printed Staffordshire other than the valuable dark blue is more suitable for shelves than cabinets. When placed in well defined groups it can be made a decidedly interesting feature of a room. The bowls are especially good in outline and decoration and a collection made up exclusively of such specimens would make an extremely attractive showing. A certain bowl collector who gathers in her favorites rather for their decorative aspect than for actual value, has over thirty of "late Staffordshire." In the number are several of "mulberry" ware. As with the flowing blue, which in many ways it resembles, the rounded surfaces are so much more interesting than the flat. The bowls in both cases have high bases with well rounded proportions. Octagonal sides are sometimes found in bowls of the 1840 period. They stand rather high and clearly indicate their day and generation.

Brown is a color less common in Staffordshire than either green, pink or blue. It lacks the beauty of the other tones, but has occasionally one feature not found in the colors mentioned and that is a deep ivory tone in the body of the paste. When this attractive tint is found on an old teapot, the natural supposition is that it has become discolored through the action of the tea on a porous glaze. But

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with brown Staffordshire, the plates often show this lovely background and of such a general evenness as to dispel the idea that they were used for baking pies. It is quite true that pies were even better than tea leaves for giving a deep and beautiful shading to porous crockery. Gravy- and sauce-boats in the course of long usage lost their original whiteness and became deep ivory. Pickle dishes also went through a change of tone.

But the brown Staffordshire seems to have been of a more creamy foundation and thus has a beauty quite its own. As with all later crockery bearing this elastic title the ground-work shows far more than in the early printing. Plates have a center design with broad margins. On the flange a border is usually seen which is made up from some *motif* used in the main decoration. Borders are well executed as they are in all Staffordshire things.

The views are seldom American or English. They are frequently "Italian," occasionally exhibit a blending of Chinese and other unrelated *motifs*, and in such cases show a decided retrogression in design. A few patterns, however, are beautifully drawn and printed, and are splendid examples of what the later potters of the crowded Staffordshire district were capable of doing. These "views"

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were the work of skilled designers and were sold to potters, who printed them in a variety of colors, brown, green or pink, as the demand happened to be.

Many of the best scenes have the tradition of being drawn by Turner and copied by the more ambitious potters. At least, the finest of the 1830 to 1850 pieces are called thus by the few collectors who have given much study to the subject. Such platters as are illustrated, are of this class and are among the best of their kind. Even in a black and white half-tone they have an entirely different character from the dark blue Staffordshire so often illustrated. Placed in a cabinet or a cupboard they have not sufficient carrying power to be very ornamental, but at nearer range they are full of distinction. There is a real etching quality to the landscapes.

Many of the men well known for their achievements in dark blue made the later wares. There were, however, many unknown makers. This crockery is seldom signed in the careful early manner and while there are a number of initialed pieces, it is impossible to know with much certainty about the makers.

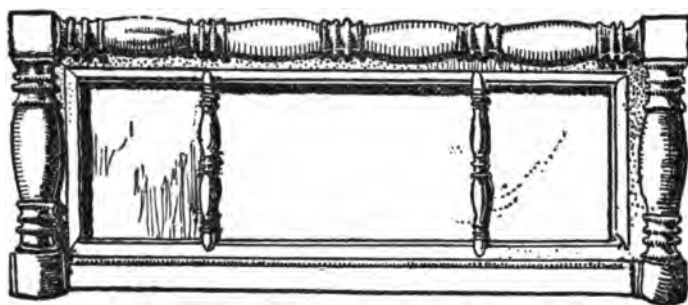
None of the Staffordshire mentioned is of the truly important variety. The finding of it in many

STAFFORDSHIRE LANES

instances would be accidental and the buying thereof quite incidental. But it is upon just such accidents and just such incidents that many collections are built. No one would deliberately specialize on pale blue teapots, pink sugar-bowls, or dark brown plates, but the possession of one such article might lead to unexpected avenues. Old Chelsea, Spode or Bow might lurk at the end of a hidden by-path.

It is well to begin with the nineteenth century and work backwards, taking the things at hand, as they please and charm, and gradually weeding and sifting until fine specimens only are retained—not necessarily costly ones, but typical ones, things that mean something—representative pieces of a period or class, possessing value as bits of decoration, or having historic interest. A lifelong hobby may result from the first casual possession. In the initial purchase of a piece of pewter, old print, faded sample or bit of Staffordshire the end is not foreseen, and this is deliberately planned by the happy Fates.





CHAPTER II

BLUE STAFFORDSHIRE HIGH ROAD

A CHINESE poet has likened the blue of old Hawthorn to the cloudless sky of a spring morning, but no poet has described the deep blue of old Staffordshire. To many collectors the English blue is more fascinating, doubtless for the reason that the fragile and costly Hawthorn is usually viewed through the glass door of a museum cabinet, while the coarse and technically imperfect Staffordshire may be handled, owned, and loved. Collecting Chinese porcelains is an expensive hobby; collecting English earthenware may be made as expensive or inexpensive as one chooses. Hundreds of dollars may be expended upon historical pieces; a very modest sum will purchase a small collection of pieces, equally blue, equally charming, but devoid of historic interest.

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"What do you mean by historical china?" once wrote an amateur. "Is it china that belonged to Washington or other famous persons?" That was ten years ago. To-day the term "historical" as applied to English china decorated with scenes and events connected with American history is too well known to need explanation.

The particular charm of this old blue crockery is hard to define. Its "historical" significance is only part of its fascination. "It's the color that makes it so well worth while," says a fair feminine collector whose dining-room walls are hung with plates and platters. "There is nothing like it in the china world. If you begin with blue Staffordshire, you end with blue Staffordshire. Nothing else really counts."

"It's the quaintness of it," declares another enthusiast, whose corner cupboards are fairly bursting with sugar-bowls, teapots, and creamers. "There is nothing else quite like it in outline."

A collector who is a specialist among specialists, buying only historical pieces and only those relating to the state of New York, says: "It is this way. You begin with the 'Table-Rock, Niagara' by Enoch Wood, stunning print, beautiful shell border. You buy it by accident. Ten to one you don't know

BLUE STAFFORDSHIRE HIGH ROAD

how many New York designs there are. Chance throws the 'New York City Hall' by Ridgway in your path. It's expensive, but it's a nice companion to 'Niagara,' and you buy it. Then you learn that one Stubbs, another English potter, made a 'City Hall' plate, too. You hunt for it. Friendly dealers lend assistance. Finally you find it, buy it, only to learn that a certain Jackson tried his hand at the same building. It takes a long time to locate this plate, but the fun of pursuit is yours, and you do not give up until you have secured the elusive Jackson. It may be located in a little town on the Maine coast, or a fishing village on Cape Cod. When you unpack it you find that it is dark brown. No one told you that it wouldn't be blue. You put it away on a shelf, and determine to acquire no more plates.

"One day you read that a ten-inch Jackson 'Hancock plate' is almost priceless. Then you have more respect for the funereal city hall and bring it forth. By this time you feel well posted on city hall architecture and look up other New York views. But you have not finished with the city hall. The gem of 'the halls' turns out to be by Stevenson, marked 'R. S. W.,' a beautiful dark blue plate with an oak leaf border. Of course you buy it and, in

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buying, learn that Stevenson made other New York views, all of which you determine to own. By this time you have decided to confine your purchases to the state of New York and you are not daunted by the number of designs. Why, the Hudson River series is a collection in itself—to say nothing of the Erie plates which I possess only in part. It is like collecting the scattered volumes of a rare set of books. If you begin you cannot stop. Costly? Sometimes, very. I have paid ninety dollars for a plate and I have paid ten cents at a rummage sale for a rare 'Battery' pitcher—cracked, of course, but still a good specimen. And by the way, if you hear of a 'Scudder's Museum' let me know. Few people know anything about this building, for it was torn down long ago, but Stevenson put it on a plate. I need it to complete the Stevenson set. You can't mistake it, for it is marked 'Scudder's American Museum, R. S. W.' ”

A well-filled purse is needed for the New York plates, for some of the most costly of historical designs are found in this series. A collection relative to Massachusetts could be made equally interesting—and expensive. Under this caption would come the famous "Harvard College" by Stevenson, the rare "Hancock House" by Jackson, the well-known



"Park Theatre," Stevenson; "City of Albany," Wood; "La Grange," Wood; "Baltimore and Ohio Railroad" (Incline),
 Wood; "Capitol at Washington," Stevenson; "States," Clews

BLUE STAFFORDSHIRE HIGH ROAD

"Octagon Church, Boston" by Ridgway, the interesting "State House" views by Rogers and others, the valuable "Landing of the Pilgrims" by Wood, and the highly prized but scarcely beautiful "Nahant Hotel" by Stubbs. Most desirable of all, with the possible exception of the "Harvard," would be the "Arms of Massachusetts" made by Thomas Mayer, belonging to that extremely interesting series, the "Arms of the Thirteen Original States."

The resources of the Staffordshire potters seem to have been unlimited when they turned their attention to making tableware for the American market. That they were sometimes inaccurate in their decorations is to be expected. That they succeeded as well as they did is a marvel, when the difficulties under which they worked are taken into consideration.

Some of the more enterprising potters sent artists to this country to make sketches of "picturesque and historic scenes." Among the number was James Clews of Cobridge, who ranks in fame with Enoch Wood. The "Landing of Lafayette" came from the Clews pottery, and this design is among the most famous of historical patterns. It does not equal in beauty of color the various "Lafayette" designs made by Wood, but it caught the popular fancy

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eighty or so years ago, and its popularity has never waned, although it is only within the last fifteen years that big prices have been paid for it. Many collectors of historical pieces begin with the "States." A few collectors limit their possessions to designs relating to Lafayette and Washington. As the latter is depicted on the "States," no Washington collection is complete without it—although a true Washington collection cannot be limited to Staffordshire. Liverpool and other wares must be included.

For a long time "English views" were comparatively inexpensive, but of late these have greatly increased in value. What then can a lover of old blue buy in Staffordshire at comparatively reasonable prices?

There are many unmarked and unnamed patterns which have been neglected by collectors. There are flower designs, found occasionally on plates and platters, but more often on pitchers, creamers, cups and saucers, and sugar-bowls. There are fine bird patterns, a beehive pattern, a lovely butterfly decoration, and many pastoral views. Some are not the deepest blue; care must be taken in the selection, and, if perfect pieces only are desired, a careful examination is necessary, for cracks are sometimes

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difficult to find in dark blue wares. Again, broken pieces are so skilfully restored that the repairing is not noticed by the novice. New handles, spouts, and bases are cleverly supplied. The masterly way with which dark blue Staffordshire can be mended is well to know—for a badly broken specimen can be neatly put together and any missing piece supplied. But it is not advisable to buy a patched-up piece unless the design be so rare that it is a valuable specimen in spite of its restored condition. Collectors of plates usually demand proof pieces, and they limit their purchases to ten-inch specimens and pass over soup plates.

Some of the deepest blue was used on vegetable dishes, tureens and pieces of this class, and if the printing is not always as clear as on a flatter surface, the color more than atones.

In a dinner set the vegetable dishes were among the most important pieces, and neither the potter nor the original owner could foresee that some day plates would be in great demand, and that only one person in ten would look twice at a potato dish. And so it happened that a few years ago it was possible to find many charming square and oval dishes, with covers and knobs well preserved, offered for sale at comparatively low prices. They

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were difficult to sell, for they appealed little to the cut-and-dried collector whose imagination was unequal to the task of seeing a vegetable dish suspended from the wall, as were his plates, or placed behind the glass doors of his cabinet, as were his snuff-boxes. But much of the joy of collecting would be lost if one tried to live up all the time to one's blue plates and snuff-boxes. Your true collector of teapots turns traitor occasionally and buys silver spoons, your enthusiastic hoarder of coins has a sneaking love for first editions, your devotee of blue plates a real liking for everything made of potter's clay—and so in hunting for a "Harvard College" platter, purchase a blue vegetable dish and find a place for it somewhere.

One thing greatly in favor of these old pieces is that they can be made to serve a real use. As nut dishes, some of the low, square specimens are charming. There are many ways to use them, and they are of a type that lend themselves to table decoration. They are useful first and beautiful afterwards, and they in no way suggest collectors' pieces, which is occasionally gratifying. As fruit dishes, minus the covers, they are very decorative. Red apples are highly interesting when placed in Staf-

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fordshire ware, while oranges in a blue dish won the praise of William Morris. And why not use old dishes if we have them?

I know a young woman who could never be prevailed upon to appear at breakfast until some one gave her a flowing blue tea-set which she renamed a coffee-service and used in a blue-and-white dining-room. The joy of pouring her own coffee from an old, high, slender tea-pot was greater than that of a breakfast tray in her room, and thus what "Mr. George" of the Rollo books would call "a moral reform" was brought about by old blue tableware.

All the potters of Staffordshire, both the famous and the less famous ones, made dinner sets. It is possible to find vegetable dishes of all kinds bearing the name of Wood, Clews, Stevenson, Ridgway, Adams, Rogers, Tams, Stubbs and others equally celebrated.

Could the old potters of Staffordshire come back to earth, what would be their astonishment to discover the prices given for their humble plates! Shillings instead of dollars were originally paid for these glorious blue pieces over which collectors now make such lively bidding. Some of the prices brought by "historical blue" at recent auction sales

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are so out of proportion to their original value as to be almost absurd. The highest price paid for a piece of Staffordshire which has come to my notice was at the Burritt sale a few years ago, when "a six-inch plate of the St. Paul's Church with oak leaf border by Stevenson" sold for \$210. The editor of "Old China," in commenting upon this circumstance, says: "This, of course, is a very rare plate and it is difficult to say what its value is. It is worth what a collector who wants it badly is willing to pay, but \$210 seems an excessive sum for a six-inch plate of printed ware, and there is no doubt that the same sum could be profitably used in the purchase of many good old specimens, not historical, but just as interesting."

For purely decorative purposes platters have few equals. The rectangular shapes gave a good opportunity for depicting the extensive views, with which the clever Staffordshire potters ornamented their wares. A surface longer than it was high afforded a much better foundation for these pictorial fancies than a circular one. With especially rare subjects, a twenty-two-inch platter is valued at one hundred dollars. Prices fluctuate on all historical designs and it is not safe to say that to-day's figure will be duplicated to-morrow. It

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would also be unwise to predict that it would be lower. Those who paid twenty-five dollars fifteen years ago for a "States," might buy it to-day for less, if the circumstances were favorable. On the other hand, certain subjects have increased in value. The Richard Jordan plate or platter—and, in fact, most of Heath's work has advanced in value. Schedules have been made from time to time of the most prominent plates and platters, and prices listed. Yet without much avail, for each locality has its scale, and dealers in the same town do not always agree. Big shops can naturally ask more than little ones.

Such prosaic questions as rents count much in the prices asked for old blue Staffordshire. The man in the ramshackle little shop around the corner will not ask an Avenue price. Staffordshire bought in the country, on the contrary, is often higher than in the city. The time when blue china could be picked up in New England farmhouses for very little is past, though certain blue subjects like the "Sheltered Peasants" and other fine compositions, not coming under the head of historical, may be secured at comparatively reasonable rates.

In explanation of the high prices asked for the rarest historical plates it may be said that the speci-

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mens are not only in "proof" condition—minus cracks, nicks, or knife scratches—but the printing is flawless. Unless one has carefully compared duplicate designs, no idea of the difference in the clearness and beauty of the decoration can be gained. A very dark printing, without contrast of light and shade, does not come up to the highest standard, and critical collectors will not accept it. Some people prefer the blue of Clews, many place the Stevensons at the top of the list, while others swear by Wood—but the same test of a fine clear print is demanded by the very particular. The late Arthur True considered a fine Wood plate the most desirable from a pictorial point of view; and if one will take the trouble to examine the various designs by this old potter, or, lacking the originals, compare illustrations of Wood's famous pieces with those of other Staffordshire potters, a wider range of tone will be noted. The lights and shadows are clearly defined and the plate or platter has the character of a picture. Many collectors do not make a great point of the way the design is printed, but a few do, and they are willing to pay the price.

Some individuals are fortunate enough to pick up fine specimens for comparatively reasonable prices. They have china luck. One historical enthusiast



Dark blue Staffordshire bowl, flower-basket pattern



The "Sheltered Peasants" platter is a well-executed bit of Staffordshire

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never pays more than fifteen dollars for an American design nor more than five for an English one. He makes that his limit and does not exceed it, and his collection is remarkably fine. He does not buy from city dealers nor does he patronize famous sales except as an interested spectator. Just where he picks them up he does not divulge.

Enoch Wood is associated with the shell border, Stevenson with the oak leaf, Ridgway with the rose, and Mayer with the trumpet flower, yet each, at times, used different *motifs*, and occasionally other potters borrowed from them.

In one illustration, Wood is represented three times, twice by the shell border and once by the grape and hollyhock, the latter surrounding the residence of Lafayette. This "La Grange" plate is one of Wood's best specimens of printing, but it has never equaled in value his shell-bordered plates, which are devoted largely to American subjects.

English and Continental scenes have beauty of design. Naturally the old castles and churches of Europe afford more picturesque subjects than the crude buildings of early America. Hospitals, almshouses, railroads, even when rendered in a beautiful dark blue, are not things of beauty, although it may be said that the borders of all these "views" are in-

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variably attractive, usually well drawn and with a good deal of decorative interest. On the plates setting forth American views, the borders are usually well separated from the center. They seldom extend across or are made a part of the scene itself. With the plates bearing old world subjects the borders have a charming way of blending in with the central decoration; of being a part of it. With some of the castle views the borders are wonderfully effective.

Adams, for instance, used trees with fine results, showing a rather distant view with a good deal of light sky, and the trees of darker blue, broadly sketched. These have far more charm than the much-desired American views where this particular decorative quality is absent. Still, there is a great deal of force and quality to all dark-blue Staffordshire. It certainly has a snap and go that far finer wares cannot approach. Hung in the right place, how telling the dark blue pieces are!

In the first group of six plates, Clews is represented by the famous "States," one of the most celebrated of all historical designs. No other blue plate is so well known, has been so often described, or so many times illustrated. Its bor-

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der is all its own. Clews did not repeat it elsewhere. Fifteen states are named in the border. Liberty and Justice are depicted, Washington is shown in a medallion portrait, fruit and flowers are introduced. The plate is largely border; the central picture is small. Clews used twelve or thirteen central views; several of which have not been identified. In the small view of our illustration, sheep are grazing and a large, rather imposing building is shown in the rear. The plate with Mt. Vernon is considered one of the best of the series. One or two American collectors own the complete series, but the average collector is content with one. Although the "States" is very well known, it does not bring the price that the first plate of the group does.

The "Park Theater" plate, by Stevenson, signed R. S. W., now believed to stand for Ralph Stevenson and Williams, is among the most valuable of "historical" designs. It has brought as high a price as a hundred dollars, and might again to-day—although with the majority of Staffordshire plates the figures now run a little lower. The Park Theater is very scarce, whereas any dealer will find a proof "States" if given a little time. If one knows the

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man he is dealing with there is no danger of receiving an imitation. Clews has been imitated more than any other Staffordshire potter, possibly because his very dark printing makes imitation easier; and yet the "blackness" of the spurious Clews plates has oftentimes led to their detection. The Syntax plates, about ten years ago, appealed to several dealers as being particularly good subjects for reproduction. The one chosen for the first experiment was "Dr. Syntax Painting a Portrait," and unfortunately deceived a great many people.

In the various imitations of Syntax subjects, the color is laid on with a heavy hand. The border loses all decorative force, and the center of the plate is dark where it should be light, and *vice versa*. It is difficult to see how any one save a novice in collecting could ever be deceived by this forgery. The "Landing of Lafayette," also imitated, has a blackish tone in the shadows which is never found in genuine Clews blue. The Lafayette imitation was carried on only in a small way, but the Syntaxes were taken very seriously, and became the sensation of the hour among blue collectors about seven years ago. They cropped up at auction sales and in reputable antique shops and caused many discussions and much heart burning, particularly among those



"Baltimore and Ohio Railroad," Enoch Wood; "Peace and Plenty," Clews; "Cadmus," Enoch Wood; "Landing
 of Lafayette," Clews; "MacDonough's Victory," Wood; "Winter View, Pittsfield," Clews; "Erie
 Canal," Wood; "Fort Canseyvoort," Stevenson; "Chief Justice Marshall," Wood

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who paid thirty dollars for the eccentric doctor at the easel. No one knew where the plates were made, nor where they came from, so many hands had they passed through, but after a year they almost disappeared. They were "withdrawn" as quietly as they had been put upon the market, and Dr. Syntax has since been given a long rest. He seldom appears in the original, and when he does he is held at such a high value that only the favored few can buy.

There is a tale of a farmer's wife making her Thanksgiving pies on Syntax plates—using "Dr. Syntax and the Dairy Maid" for mince, "Dr. Syntax Disputing his Landlady's Bill" for pumpkin, and "Dr. Syntax Sketching from Nature" for dried apple. The enterprising collector who bought these plates, scarred and browned from much baking, considers them the special prizes among two hundred and twenty-nine pieces of Staffordshire. He has an almost complete set of Syntaxes, several Don Quixotes, and all the Wilkies.

Tams made some of the most beautiful borders to be found in printed Staffordshire, and he obtained light and shade in a unique manner. Like Wood, at his best, he kept part of his landscapes very light; sky and water as seen in his beautiful

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English views are almost white. Like Adams, he used trees for borders. In many of his Dublin and London designs, there is really no distinct border; the view seems to cover both the center and the flange of the plate. Very fine effects are seen in both Tams and Adams subjects, where this method is used.

There are a number of beautiful borders where the makers have not yet been identified. Some of these are floral *motifs*, including the striking fruit and flower renderings of several "Park" and "Castle" plates, and the rose, thistle and shamrock series. In writing of borders, it would not be fair to leave out Stubbs, with his flower schemes; Riley, with scrolls and flowers; Phillips, also flowers; Rogers, with leaves and roses; Davenport, with cornucopias, and Ridgway, with conventionalized roses; and a good deal might be said of the animals which have appeared on borders, as yet rather unclassified.

To decide which border is the finest of all those found on blue Staffordshire, would be difficult indeed. The choice—merely from the standpoint of design, would perhaps lie between the oak and acorns, by the Stevensons and the tree schemes of Adams and Tams. But the shells of Enoch Wood look very well to a collector when they border "Cad-

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mus," "Table Rock," or the "Baltimore and Ohio Railroad." So do the scrolls and flowers of Clews surrounding Lafayette's portrait. Rogers' roses and forget-me-nots accompanied by "The State House and the Cows on Boston Common," have great attractions. The floral scrolls of Joseph Heath, when encircling the residence of "Dr. Jordan, Quaker," appeal to many. And if most collectors think more about the "view" than the border, it is perhaps because they have never thought much about the subject, which once studied becomes extremely fascinating.

In looking over the lists of scenes and borders of the Staffordshire potters, one wonders how they found time to turn out such an infinite variety. The American subjects alone must have kept them very busy. That the general standard of excellence is so high in color and design is greatly to their credit. A very keen interest would have been lost to the collecting world if Wood, Clews, Stevenson and other Staffordshire worthies had not given their attention to this great output of historical views. Also a decidedly lucrative business would have been lost to dealers, who for many years found "historical" a word to conjure with, and still do with certain rare plates or with certain new collectors.

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Many of the most celebrated collections of dark blue Staffordshire are quite complete and it takes something very unusual to excite interest; again, the specializing which even this one ware makes possible causes many things in Staffordshire to be unacceptable. Where American subjects alone are considered, the finest English views cause little enthusiasm, and where certain sub-divisions are recognized in American prints, lines are drawn sharply. A few people have specialized on the work of individual potters; a small group on certain geographical sections; a still smaller body on subjects pertaining to illustrious persons. Portrait plates make a good specialty, decidedly exclusive, and sufficiently expensive to make the field an uncommon one.

It would be possible to choose a certain border and confine one's efforts of heart, mind and pocket-book to that; and it would not be necessary to limit the scheme to the work of one man or to one country. If the shell border were chosen, for instance, the work of Enoch Wood would form the bulk of the collection, and most of the subjects would be American. But—and here the great charm of the plan would lie—it need not be all Wood nor all American.



Dark blue Staffordshire, historical and otherwise

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That Stevenson used the shell border came as a great surprise a few years ago—that Wood used it with some of his English views was discovered some time before, but is still comparatively new to many people who love blue Staffordshire and know a good deal about it.

The "Wadsworth Tower" cups and saucers of the Robineau sale, under the auspices of the magazine "Old China," afforded a most interesting example of Stevenson's use of shells. There were two cups and saucers startlingly alike as to border and scene, one marked Wood, the other Stevenson, and the border of the latter, if there were any choice, seemed a shade finer. Such circumstances are decidedly interesting and add that touch of the new and unexpected, which makes up the real joy of any collecting mania. Doubtless it was known to a few well posted Staffordshire enthusiasts that Stevenson had produced this particular scene and particular border, but it was not known to many, as was evidenced by the interest in these two catalogue items, respectively "527" and "528." The price mark on "528," the Stevenson cup and saucer, was a little higher than on the Wood item, a significant fact of the greater rarity and interest of the Stevenson pieces.

Wood is seen in his most pleasing vein in his

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marines and the variety is extensive. The shell border is especially appropriate when surrounding a sea view, a fact the "father of blue Staffordshire" evidently realized.

The first plate in the top row of the second historical illustration is the "Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, on the Straight." (The "B. & O. on the Incline" is shown in the first illustration.) The last plate in the second row is the steamer "Chief Justice Marshall." Two other marines are included; the "Cadmus," number three, first row—and "MacDonough's Victory," number one, second row. The "Victory" plate is a very spirited one, while the "Cadmus" and "Chief Justice Marshall" specimens have all the true Wood qualities of fine printing, good spacing and beautiful color. The nine plates of this group are all interesting. They set forth a variety of types, styles, treatment, etc., and are particularly pleasing from the border standpoint. They give an idea of the printing and general composition of several of the most famous subjects.

The second plate in the first group is the decorative "Peace and Plenty," by Clews, an excellent companion to the "States," by the same potter, and with a good deal of the same feeling, though not so well drawn in the central portion. Plate four is

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the celebrated "Landing of Lafayette," by Clews, with one of his most pleasing borders. Clews is also represented in the lower row of this group by the "Pittsfield" plate, a well-known and always popular specimen among collectors. This plate has its own special border, the Pittsfield church, greatly reduced. Clews produced a good many special border designs. He does not seem to have given quite as much prominence to one *motif*, as did Wood, Stevenson and Ridgway, yet when all of Wood's work is taken into consideration, the foreign as well as the American, no lack of variety can be charged against him. The grape borders of some of his Irish and English views need special mention, so full of grace and charm are they.

The Stevensons, R. and A. have always been greatly beloved by American collectors. Possibly a vote as to the most beautiful border found in Staffordshire would give the verdict to Ralph Stevenson's oakleaf and acorn. This attractive *motif* is shown on the scarce "Park Theater." It is seen in even greater beauty on the "Harvard College" plate, also on the less familiar "Columbia College."

There are a number of college plates, quite enough to set one specializing, and if English colleges were included the collection could be made a

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notable one. Stevenson had a special fancy for American institutions of learning, and if his work alone were secured the showing would be decidedly attractive. Collecting Stevenson plates would be an expensive pastime and it is not recommended to the impecunious. As a millionaire's hobby it would appear to leave little to be desired.

Another interesting division would be American and English churches, cathedrals and abbeys, and would include a wide range of makers and borders. In the series there would be perhaps first of all the "Octagonal Church, Boston," by Ridgway; the "Stoughton" Church, by Stevenson, and as Clew's "Pittsfield" is largely church, that could be of the number.

Few people in looking at their old blue plates and platters have the faintest idea how the color was obtained or what the process, "transfer printing," means. To understand the term one must go back to an earlier day than that of dark blue Staffordshire and take into account the work of three men important in the history of English pottery, Sadler, Green, and Hancock. Robert Hancock is the most interesting of the group. He was the real artist of the trio. The others were skilled artisans, producing excellent things, but never quite ap-

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proaching the work of Hancock, whose best efforts are associated with the Worcester pottery. Possibly Sadler and Green were a little earlier in the field. This point is not entirely clear in the minds of collectors. To Sadler and Green had long been credited the invention, if such it may be called, of transfer printing, but within the past ten years a good deal of data has come to light in regard to Worcester happenings and if it all be true, Hancock was a trifle in the lead as regards time. Inasmuch as Hancock's work was done on china and that of the other men on pottery, it had a greater value at the time of its appearance, and is naturally now of more importance. Yet the big Liverpool pitchers which are typical examples of the transfer process on pottery are constantly growing in value and have always brought good prices.

There are many stories in regard to the origin of the process. One which has been often repeated with variations runs in the following manner: One day a well known potter watched a group of children playing with the discarded pieces of moist clay from his pottery. They also had several colored pictures. On the damp clay the bright pictures made a blurred impression. Presto! a new era in the career of the potter. These dear old stories

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are valuable in showing the credulity of mankind. There are many such. There is the servant who let the salt brine run down the sides of the earthen kettle and gave to a strolling potter the hidden secrets of salt glaze. There is the valet who, in brushing a clay powder from his master's wig, gave to Böttger the key to finding hard paste porcelain. Then there is the convenient horse who walked into a clay pit and gave to Astbury a new light on English earthenware. The stories live while more important items are forgotten.

The real kernel of transfer printing lay in the fact that the impression was made from a copper plate. Just how the copper plate could be used on a rounded surface was puzzling to potters not in the secret. When it was known that a tissue paper impression was made from the plate and quickly laid on the wet clay, the whole scheme was so simple as to cause general wonderment that it had not long before been used.

The first work in this line was in black on a white or cream colored surface. It was some time before color was used and a long period before the dark all-over printing on crockery became general. There is not much similarity between transfer Worcester and blue Staffordshire, yet the underlying

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principle of the decoration is one and the same.

Some of the original paper proofs which Wood, Ridgway and other potters used are in existence. In the Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art is a portfolio of these paper proofs and they are most instructive and interesting to all who are collecting blue Staffordshire. Here may be seen a paper impression of Wood's "Cupid behind the Bars," with its deep flower border, his "Young Philosopher," less known, and many other valuable bits of brown printed paper; for it is a point worth knowing, that the ink used on the clay was a deep brown and that firing turned it to the justly celebrated blue. Perhaps this is one reason why the attempted reproductions in the blue Staffordshire line look so unlike the real thing; the ink is probably the wrong brown. Possibly the merry forgers never heard of the brown ink and thus have missed success.





CHAPTER III

UNBEATEN PATHS IN STAFFORDSHIRE

THE popularity of the teapot has overshadowed that of the mug. Tea has always appealed to the feminine mind and the coziness and cheer of all teapots, large and small, have been important factors in their success. Not that all china collectors are women, far from it; but in this country the larger portion is undoubtedly composed of the "unpunctual sex." In England this is not so—and besides in England there is nothing especially feminine about a teapot—tea-drinking being too universal to have any such limitations.

In England, collecting runs less to one particular object and more to periods in china-making or to the work of special potteries. The pitcher collections and the ten-inch plate collections which seem to have a special fascination for the American mind,



For life and spirit few articles in Staffordshire equal Toby-jugs. Several potters of renown, notably the various members of the Wood family, made these jovial drinking mugs.



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are almost unknown over there. You will find cabinets devoted to Wedgwood, to Chelsea, to old Derby and important collections composed entirely of stone ware, salt-glaze, etc., but the happy-go-lucky way of the American collector, who either gathers in "everything old" or is interested only in this thing or that, is incomprehensible to the average Englishman. He does not see any sense in it and perhaps he is right. It is far more sensible, certainly far more educational to go in for periods in china as one would in furniture, but in this country it would be frightfully expensive and moreover it would be difficult, and when a thing becomes too difficult it ceases to be a hobby.

It is perhaps useless to compare American and English collectors. The opportunities are not only totally different, but the viewpoints are unlike and the aims are not the same. That the average Englishman knows a great deal more about the ceramic side of collecting than his American cousin is entirely true, and this brings us back to the point of view again, which in England is one of study quite as much as recreation. Over here we separate the two—perhaps that is really the only difference after all.

In this country, after plates and platters, the

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most popular articles of old china have been tea-pots and pitchers and there are several collections numbering hundreds of each. Bowls also have their devotees, but in lesser numbers which has been a matter of congratulation to those interested in bowls. When the demand is small the opportunities for finding good specimens in any line are much greater. Mugs like bowls have been rather neglected, although of late there has been a growing interest in the old drinking mugs known as "tobys" "tobeys" or "tobies"—the first spelling being in general use. With the revival of cottage ornaments, the toby is receiving attention. In its more elaborate form it was often a chimney ornament, a convivial reminder rather than an actual drinking vessel.

Many old tobys are still preserved and are to-day as brilliant of glaze and dazzling of color as when they came from the Staffordshire potteries, for Staffordshire seems to have been preëminently the home of these articles.

In my illustrations are shown a variety of tobys, some quite ornamental, well suited to flank a mantel shelf, others frankly drinking mugs without additional pretensions, a good-natured company, not averse to rounding out a century in cupboards and

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on shelves, though doubtless often regretfully reminiscent of more jovial days. Some of the specimens illustrated carry mugs and jugs as if to further emphasize their calling, others are scarcely more than beer mugs conforming to the outlines of a cocked hat, waistcoat, knee breeches and shoe buckles.

The toby idea is an old one, probably early eighteenth century, although the usual articles of the shops are late eighteenth or early nineteenth. A toby or two is a good addition to a corner cupboard and half a dozen or so look well strung along on a shelf, but if a collector wishes to specialize on these lively bits of colored clay, it would be well to plan a special place for them. Shallow cupboards make excellent backgrounds—so do recessed cupboards if they receive sufficient light; shelves built between windows or between doors are also useful, and in a limited way a toby rail is not a bad scheme. A rail partially filled with plates, teapots, etc., is not a good setting for them, for they do not take kindly to the usual miscellaneous array of things on a plate rail. They are incongruous with fine china, or with any light or dainty setting. They belong with sturdy brick chimney-breasts, and with simple, homely things. They have no drawing-room man-

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ners, and are out of place there. They go with "cottage" things now, as when first made.

Some of the best tobys are almost equal to the old colored statuettes in excellence of color and modeling. They were made by potters of renown who gave to them the same care that they did to the shepherds and shepherdesses, milkmen and dairy-maids, squires and dames, and other famous pottery pairs.

The Wood family, notable in Staffordshire annals, made tobys which reached a high degree of beauty. Ralph Wood, one of the early members of this celebrated coterie, was noted for the excellence of his glazes and for the spirited poses of his clay people. His tobys are highly prized and are among very early specimens. He was born in 1715 and did his best work about 1750. Related to the Wedgwoods by marriage, he was at one time a protégé of Thomas Wedgwood, father of Josiah. Many of his pieces are marked, others are unsigned but are recognized as his work by the extraordinary color values. His early method and the one which gave the finer results, was to color his lead glazes with metallic oxids and apply each color by means of a brush. The range was limited, but full of charm. The colors lacked the brilliancy and



A gem in Toby-jugs—Collection of Mr. W. F. Cooper

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strength of later pigments, when a different method was employed. The later scheme made use of enameled colors upon a glazed and fired surface. The meeting and mingling of colors found in the early work was absent, and though showing a greater technical skill, the tobys were not nearly so charming as the earlier ones.

Ralph Wood's son was also Ralph and they are often spoken of as "the Ralph Woods." The younger man used a different mark—namely "Ra. Wood Burslem." The mark of the elder was "R. WOOD," in large capitals. Both made statuettes, tobys and many other things, which collectors are now eagerly hunting, ranking them as among the most interesting specimens of English earthenware.

"Beautiful as are the salt-glaze molds of Aaron Wood and the skilfully modeled busts of Enoch Wood" says Frank Falkner, "the early figures and groups of the two Ralph Woods, decorated in their delicately colored glazes, may be cited as being the most artistic and original productions in earthenware figures of any of our great English potters with the one exception of that extraordinary genius John Dwight, of Fulham."

Tobys, belonging as they do to the jug family, come under the head of mugs and steins. They are

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in reality mugs with a stein record. Invented, supposedly, by one Toby Philpot, of jovial nature, they must forever stand as the most convivial of all drinking vessels. Dutch and German specimens are occasionally found and French ones are not unknown.

The "Napoleon Toby," is a remarkably fine specimen of Staffordshire, the most attractive one I have ever seen. English potters delighted in depicting Bonaparte, but they seldom gave him the attractive countenance of this jug. They made him tall and thin, or short and abnormally fat. They gave him queer clothes and labeled him "Boney." This interesting piece shows the Little Corporal in a pleasant guise—suave of countenance and very well dressed. There is a smoothness of texture and a finish about the work seldom seen in English drinking mugs.

The tobys in the group show early nineteenth century specimens. They proclaim their genuineness even in black and white. This cannot be asserted of all English tobys, for many have been so cleverly imitated that it is difficult for even an old china collector to be absolutely sure which are old and which are new. There is often a surprising freshness about old pottery and china—a perfection of glaze and color, which leads the most trusting collectors to

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have occasional doubts. Many of the old tobys are particularly spick-and-span. They could not have seen much service else they were less "perfect." It is possible that many of the fine pairs were used as chimney ornaments, and have no convivial past. They took the place of Staffordshire statuettes which were long used in homes where figures of Chelsea and Derby were considered too costly.

The first tobys were in reality scarcely more than hollow figures to which a handle had been added. They grew more and more like mugs as time went on. At first the cap or hat lifted off, forming a cover. The succeeding style had the hat, but it was part of the mug.

Various are the stories in connection with the origin of these pieces. One tradition is that the word "toby" is merely a corruption of "topper," and this theory sounds plausible, although there is good foundation for the Philpot story. While sometimes used for ornamental purposes, the real mission of the article is always apparent. The English Toby is a good fellow, although not always pleasant of countenance. Sometimes he is hideously crafty. Of crude workmanship are many of these gay pieces. The clay looks as if modeled by hand, and as if it had had but a single firing. The colors are often

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unmixed and appear to have been put on with a full brush, drying as they would.

To the untrained eye the jugs look much alike, in outline. Not so to one who makes tobys his hobby. No two, unless they form a pair, are identical. Large, small, coarse and fine, they will repay the collector who wishes to specialize on this unbeaten path in Staffordshire ceramics. If pepper-boxes, why not tobys? Surely the latter afford far more interesting opportunities. Pepper-boxes by their very nature cannot exhibit a great variety of design, while tobys present a most varied assortment. For variety of color the early nineteenth century examples rival a Dutch tulip garden; the brightest tones are used in waistcoats, knee-breeches and cocked hats. These are in decided contrast to the paler ones from the potteries of the Ralph Woods.

In looking for tobys, the antique shops offer greater possibilities than old houses. In rural New England the opportunities of finding them are few. They do not seem to belong to the New England character, although doubtless in the old days, when even the minister had his toddy, they were not unknown. But they never could have been very common, else they would be more numerous to-day.



Cottage figures of crude Staffordshire, attributed to Enoch Wood

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Chimney ornaments in New England ran to vases. China figures were seldom seen in the stiff old parlors, which are still within the remembrance of many people. There were tall "India" vases, and flower holders of English china, but seldom Staffordshire Tobys or the still more interesting Staffordshire figures.

Miss Gertrude Jekyll, in that delightful book, "Old West Surrey," speaks of the farmhouse "parlor" as she remembered it in her childhood: "The most characteristic of the mantel-shelf ornaments were the various figures of colored glazed pottery and coarse porcelain. Many of these took the form of jugs. The toby jug was often seen; the figure an eighteenth century farmer, with knee-breeches, three-cornered hat, flowered, long-skirted coat and frilled shirt-bands. The old figure is extremely life-like. He holds his foaming jug of ale upon his knee and his face wears a broad grin in pleasurable anticipation of a refreshing draught. His pipe lies on the ground beside him. It is an actual jug. The handle is at the back and the forward cock of the hat forms the spout."

Chimney ornaments offer an extensive field, and as yet an unhackneyed one. Your chimney ornament may be anything from a woolly china dog to

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a brightly painted villa. It may be common Staffordshire crockery, or a really fine porcelain; it may be a work of art, or an atrocious daub. If it is a real cottage specimen, it is quite apt to be a daub, for the cottage ornament pure and simple was of humble origin, made of coarse clay, decorated by a potter whose education, if he had any, was not along art lines, and turned out to sell at two-and-six apiece; sometimes for one-and-six. But two shillings and sixpence was, and is, quite a sum to an English cottager. It ought to buy a very respectable china cow, and, to the potter's credit, it may be said that it did.

The cow vied in popularity with the woolly dog, and exhibited a greater variety. It was frequently mottled or spotted, and could be used as a cream jug when the family tired of it as an ornament. There was the willow pattern; the bridge and the willow trees and the willow birds adapting themselves as best they could to the outlines of a cream-colored cow. Then there was the calico cow, touched up with red and black and a little blue. Some of these impossibilities have lately been copied, and are new as well as ugly. It cannot be claimed that all cottage ornaments are beautiful, but most of them have an attractive quaintness, but it is misdirected energy

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to copy them. The new dog, cow, house, or peasant group has not one thing to redeem it, and must rank in artistic worth with wax fruit and feather flowers.

More interesting than the china animals were the peasant groups, houses, and the various single figures which came in pairs. The houses varied in design from cottages to castles. They were brilliantly colored, and often had the added interest of a family group in the foreground. One colored piece of Staffordshire represents three generations; the grandfather leaning on a staff, the grandmother in the doorway of the cottage, the father and mother and five children in the foreground, and several tow heads appearing from the windows; a window for each head.

The pairs are oftener of finer clay, and not a few suggest the fineness of porcelain. The colors are usually well applied and show a decided advance over the animals and houses. Familiar couples are the dairyman and the milkmaid, the shepherd and the shepherdess, and the squire and his dame. Peasant musicians are sometimes found, and these are usually crude copies of Chelsea and Chelsea-Derby. The prices of these figures have advanced steadily within the past few years. A demand for anything, particularly in the china line, makes prices go up,

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and a demand in china also creates a supply. There can be little left in the rural cottages of England if we judge from the shops and the collections; yet a visit through Old West Surrey, especially in the village of Godalming, would doubtless bring to light a number of good Staffordshire bits. The shepherd and shepherdess have special significance in a Godalming cottage, for that region was at one time a great wool-growing district. Thousands of sheep were pastured on the commons, and many people made their living in the wool industry. The china cow and the dog do not seem to have been popular in this village. The clever potter realized the significance of something quite different and made tiny sheep. The clay when soft was combed to give it a fleecy look, and the sheep are far more lifelike than the spotted dogs.

Leaving cottage ornaments and coming to the broader classification of mantel and chimney ornaments, we must include the finest porcelain figures of Europe, especially Dresden, Bow, Chelsea, Derby, and Derby-Chelsea. They suggest the charming creations of Watteau and other artists of the eighteenth century, who delighted in dressing their subjects in fancy costumes, and giving them pastoral titles.

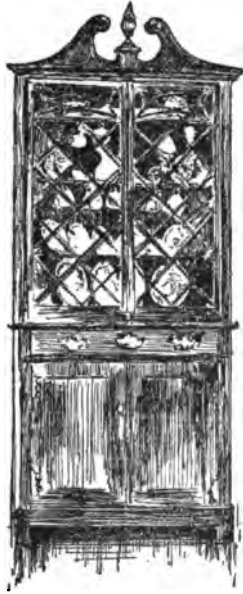
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Most of the Staffordshire figures, however, found in the shops or which drift into the collectors' hands by one way or another, are seldom the work of well-known potters. They are just plain "Staffordshire," a term, like charity, covering many things. They are usually spirited as to pose, brilliant as to color, and fairly moderate as to price. At the time of their birth they were quite inexpensive, often costing but a few shillings each. Cottage ornaments they were and the cottage flavor still clings. Unlike the figures of Chelsea, Derby and Bow, they are real peasants, not fine ladies dressed in brocades playing at pastoral sports. They have frocks such as real dairy maids and shepherdesses would wear, not creations from a fashionable modiste in Bond Street. Your Chelsea dairy maid and shepherdess might be dressed for the Marquis of Queensbury's lawn party, that famous *fête champêtre* of the late George II period.

The British Museum affords a wonderful opportunity to study chimney ornaments. Bow and Chelsea are seen here in great perfection, also many charming statuettes in Derby biscuit. Every phase of the subject is represented. The Museum does not take kindly to cottage ornaments. Only the best work of such potters as Enoch Wood and the

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Ralph Woods are shown. The catalogue gives some very illuminating notes, as follows: "An immense number of figures were made in Staffordshire earthenwares, though they are very scantily represented in this collection, the bulk of them being of little merit, mostly made for cottage decoration, and of a crude and rustic description; and the class consisting of direct imitations of porcelain models may be dismissed with small ceremony." But in an American cupboard, far more than the costly porcelain do the dear old cottage ornaments belong.





CHAPTER IV

NEGLECTED CORNERS

A NEGLECTED spot in ceramic history is the English delft period of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Few American collectors pay much attention to early English wares believing, and quite rightly, that specimens made prior to 1760 are extremely scarce. Yet a slight knowledge of the pottery undertakings of the seventeenth century will in no wise cool the ardor for blue Staffordshire, and might give added zest to all collecting. Certain it is that the delft of England, rare as it is in the country of its birth, will repay study, for it forms a consistent preface to later wares.

The great commercial prosperity of Holland during the seventeenth century brought her into close connection with other countries. In artistic

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achievements the Dutch of the seventeenth century were far in advance of their neighbors across the channel. In the making of pottery, in the intricate art of the silversmith, in wood inlay and marquetry, Holland had much to teach the world. She had the advantage of a close touch with China and she was quick to seize and make her own the best that came to her shores. Hardly less interesting than the Dutch imitation of things Chinese is the English imitation of things Dutch, and in the delft of Lambeth, Bristol, and Liverpool it found its best expression.

Dutch delft at the time of its first manufacture was unlike anything then produced in England. It was neither stoneware nor china, but faience, and was the result of long experimenting on the part of Dutch potters to produce a ware which would compete with the blue-and-white Chinese porcelain brought back by merchants of the East India Company. Porcelain was not yet to be achieved by Continental potters, who, however, persevered in spite of failures until another century brought success, but that achievement does not belong to the history of delft.

At the time of the first delft making in England, about 1671, "slip decoration" was at its height



Dutch potters copied the Chinese



English potters copied the Dutch
Bowls of Delft

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and the new ware made its progress slowly. The method of decorating a clay body by means of slip was well understood by the English potters, particularly at Wrotham where the ware was made in great quantities. Staffordshire and Derbyshire also had their factories. The Wrotham product is sometimes called Toft ware, after Thomas Toft, one of its first makers.

If one possessed a hobby for systematic collecting and were able to secure typical specimens in the order of their production, both slip ware and English delft should be included. The former, not only for its tremendous value as a connecting link between the crude pottery attempts of early England, often loosely classed as "mediæval" and the fine stoneware of the late seventeenth century, but quite as much for the primitive, naïve character of the decorations and for the fact that slip ware appeared simultaneously in several widely separated countries. This has been true of several great pottery movements, notably of the making of faïence. In Italy, in Spain, even in far-away Mexico, potters were working out, more or less crudely according to their lights, the same ceramic problems. Spanish influence does not entirely explain Mexico's wonderful achievements in pottery making, although

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it does account for the perfecting of the stanniferous enamels and for certain developments in her beautiful lusters.

English delft was as great an advance over slip ware as the fine salt-glazed pieces were an advance over delft. It was crude in many ways, but it had depth and richness of color and a vigor of design which, while partly Dutch, and a trifle Oriental, was still unmistakably English. It had one great beauty largely accidental which later and better methods in pottery making did away with. The decorations were applied on a very moist background and the colors spread at the edges, giving an impressionistic quality to the work which was quite unintended by the potter. Particularly when soft greens and yellows were used with blues did the unconscious decorator occasionally arrive at great things. He was also aided in artistic effects by being unable to secure true white in his enamel glazes and thus the colors were doubly harmonious.

Periods in pottery-making, as in furniture-designing, overlap. While delft to a certain extent superseded slip ware, the latter continued to be made until early in the eighteenth century and from the first exhibited a great diversity of color and decoration. The quaint, naïve charm of this old pot-

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tery places it far ahead of many later, and, technically speaking, far more perfect, wares. The brightness of the glaze and the bold character of the decorations put it into a class by itself. Slip ware, whether of English, German, or early American make has certain qualities which render it unlike other pottery experiments.

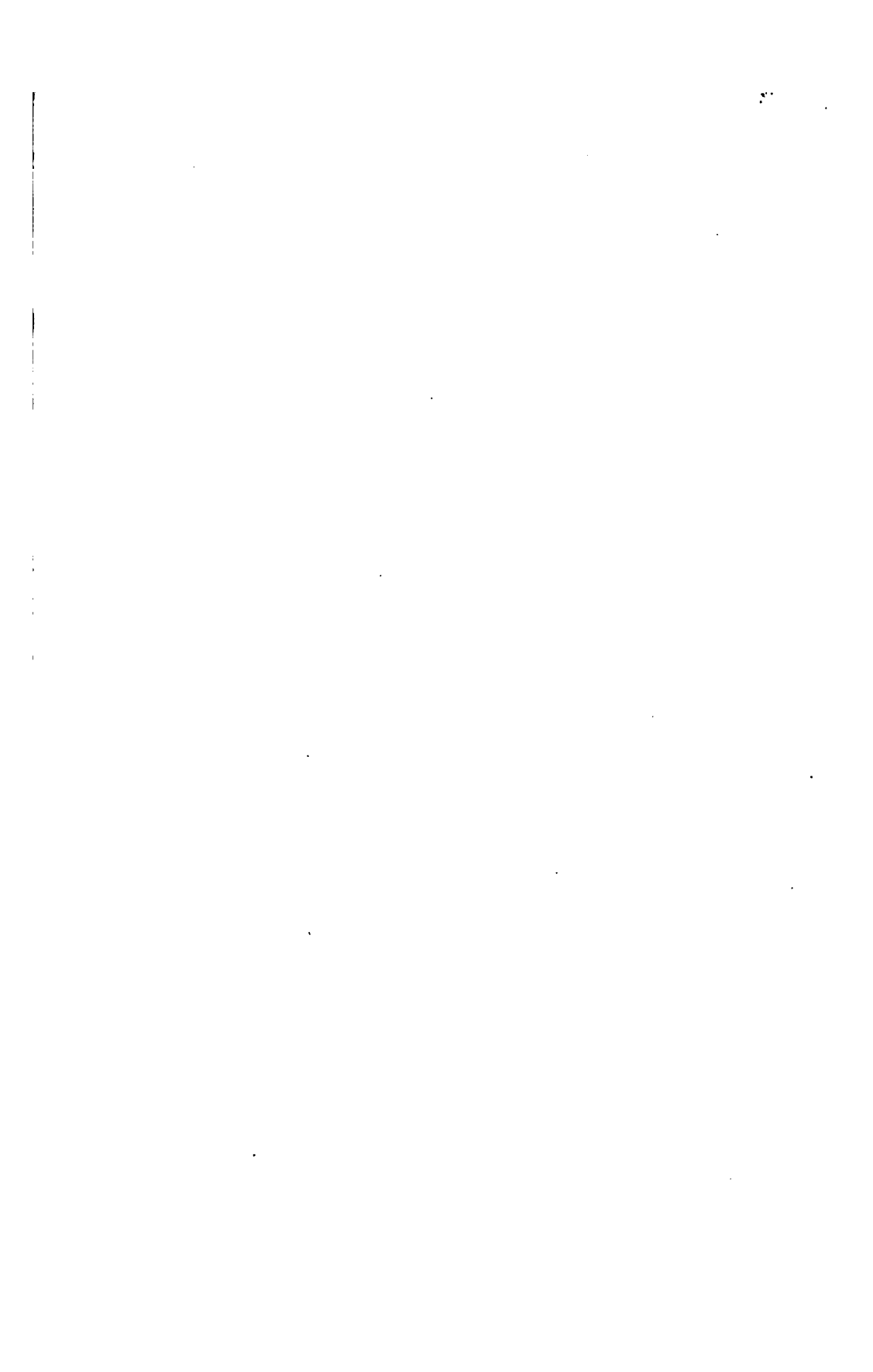
Toft ware is a good thing to begin the study with, even if only one piece were secured. The making of this slip is an interesting pottery story and in our own country in the early nineteenth century it was revived in another form. Some of the old Pennsylvania pie plates are in the Toft manner while others are in the *sgraffito* style. Thomas Toft and Ralph Toft made crude pottery dishes, usually of coarse red clay decorated in raised yellow clay, the latter often applied from a tube, much as fancy cakes are now ornamented. Initials, mottoes, rhymes are found in Toft ware and full of quaint charm they are. Pennsylvania potters in making the humble pie plates which now are the most valued articles is several collections, used with much greater success the tube method. Their colors were better and more varied and while they clung to yellows and terra cottas they also used green with great effect. The *sgraffito* method consisted of incising

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the design—really scratching it through one layer of clay down to another—and producing results just the opposite from the Toft way. “Trailed” is the word used in England to denote the Toft method.

Part of the charm of the old ware is the archaic character of the designs which would undoubtedly be out of place in modern pottery. Not only were the decorations quaint in the extreme, but the clay itself was fashioned into shapes, strange in outline and stranger in name. “Tygs” and “fuddle cups” were some of the articles. The tyg was a drinking mug of three handles and the fuddle cup a mug of three or five divisions, each emptying in turn into the main cup. The imbiber was supposed to drain the cup and thus learn the full meaning of its title. Aside from plates, most old slip ware is in the form of drinking vessels, and affords an excellent commentary on the life of the times.

Plates afforded a broader scope for decoration, and some of these old pieces have long inscriptions which must have taxed the ingenuity of the potter. Occasionally they are too long and the final lines are so crowded that they can scarcely be read. Many specimens are dated, a fact which has added greatly to the pleasure of collectors—for an old date in





**Fulham jug made by John Dwight, initials and crown of
George I - collection of Alice Morse Earle**



**German stoneware in "Graybeard," or "Bellarmín"
pattern, widely copied by English potters**

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slip is a silent witness of the year in which it was made. The figures cannot be erased or altered, nor would it be possible to add old dates and have them mistaken for genuine. A plate or a tyg dated 1676 was made in 1676, and this indisputable fact is a source of great satisfaction to the owner of the plate or tyg. In these days when it is possible to doctor old silver, even to the extent of halving old teapots and creamers, thus securing part of the mark, and joining a new half on each old one thereby securing two "antiques" instead of one, it is gratifying to know that some old things defy such methods. It is pleasant to think that the old slip ware is *all* old, for no one has as yet appeared who could cut a plate in two and forge copies—fitting together one old half with one new one. It would be much easier to make a new plate, and this has not yet been considered worth while. Meanwhile the old slip ware is among the few things which are really what they purport to be, and thus all honor to it.

In this country old English slip is occasionally found, but for the real joy of collecting, or even studying, one should be on English soil. The Victoria and Albert Museum and the British Museum afford splendid opportunities for study. The

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very name British Museum suggests something so vast and overpowering that it repels rather than invites. One hour spent within its walls dispels this feeling. The collections are so admirably arranged, so complete in themselves, and so detached that one can study pottery and porcelain for weeks and be quite unconscious of mummies. Or one bent on illuminations can haunt the old book wing and never guess the near presence of the Rosetta stone.

A later Toft produced a great variety of pieces, using white, buff, red, orange, green, black and brown to secure his effects. The tulip was used as a decorative *motif* by him to a great extent, and it is interesting to know that a century later the potters of Pennsylvania called a good deal of their slip and *sgraffito* pottery "tulip ware."

Derbyshire slip seems to be of more obscure origin. Many of the pieces are molded and present elaborate patterns. Later developments in slip led to the combed, marble, and agate wares which belong to the eighteenth century and are associated with such familiar names as Wheildon and Wedgwood.

It was not until comparatively late in that famous century of porcelain and furniture that our colonists

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imported much china. The more ordinary household articles were, at that time, made in this country, such as crocks and jars and other purely useful things, and interesting they are to-day, comparing not unfavorably with their English prototypes; great jars of brownish greens and greenish browns, made doubtless for preserves and pickles, but to-day quite unsurpassed for holding field flowers. Sometimes smaller things are found as jugs and mugs, but the question usually arises, Are they English or American?—and it is often hard to decide.

English stoneware is a subject by itself and is divided into several branches, beginning with the early pottery at Fulham. John Dwight's name is associated with this industry and should be written in letters of gold, for he ranks high in pottery annals with a fame second only to Wedgwood's. His output was not so large as Wedgwood's, his influence was not so great on his contemporaries, but his work so far as its merits are concerned will always be awarded a secure and serene place in English pottery making.

Few people think of stoneware in connection with mantel ornaments, yet there are several portrait statuettes in Fulham ware, made by John Dwight, which are declared to be "undoubtedly the finest

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and most original productions of any English potter of that period. Indeed it would be hard to find their equal among Continental wares. It is nothing short of astounding to see this sudden and brilliant outburst of the potter's genius at a time when the greater part of the country had not advanced beyond the crude or picturesque slip wares." John Dwight died in 1703, so these beautiful specimens are very old. The bust of Prince Rupert is a technical wonder even to potters of the present day. One of the finest figures is the portrait of a lady, representing Flora. It is eleven inches high, and exquisitely modeled.

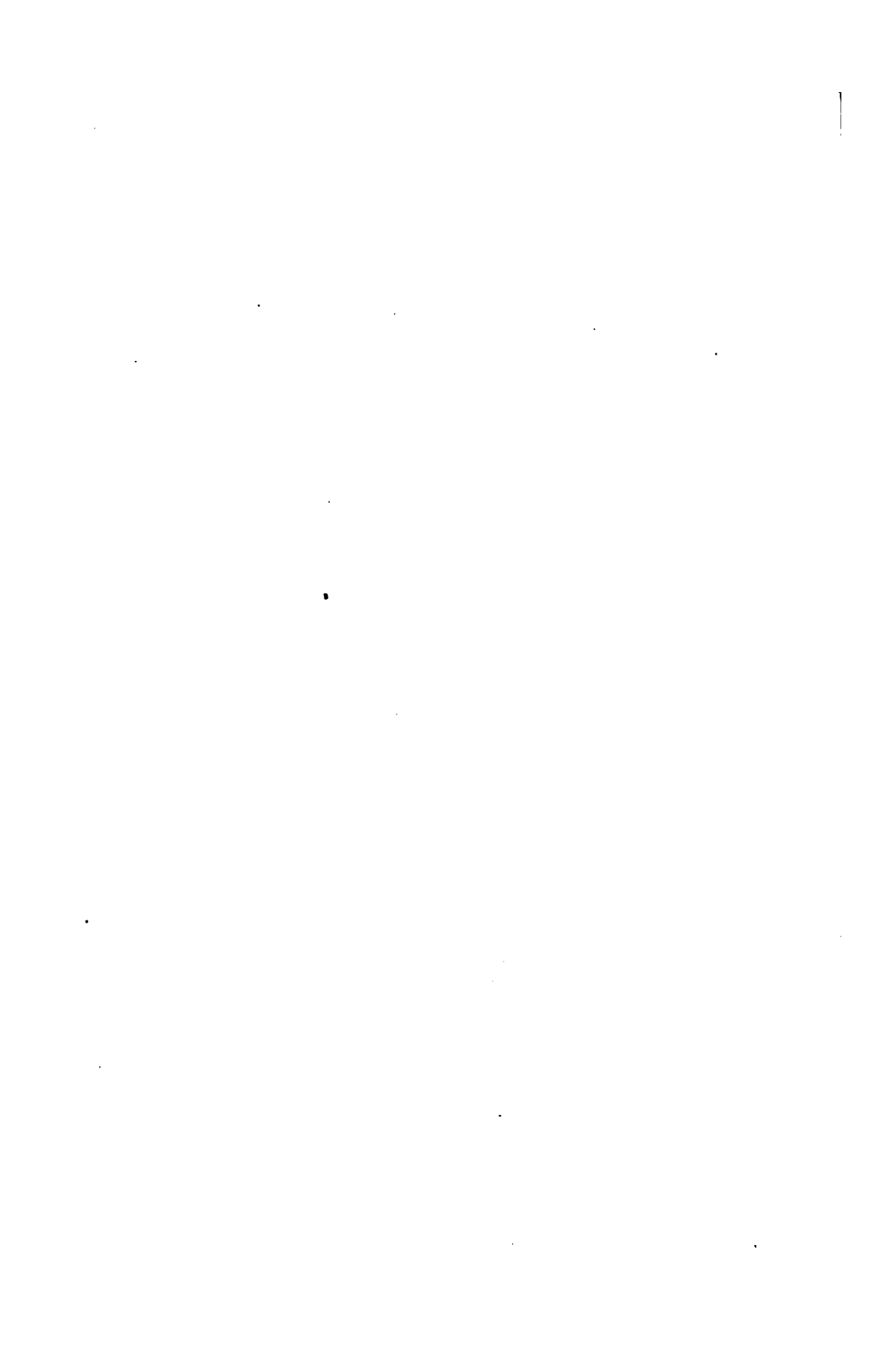
In the year 1671, Dwight obtained from Charles II a patent granting to him the right to make stoneware. The patent reads, "stoneware, vulgarly called Cologne ware," thus showing that German wares were then well known in England. This Fulham potter did more than reproduce the crude German wares then in use; he made succeeding potters his debtor, by perfecting the process of salt-glazing. Fine stoneware glazed with salt became in the hands of Dwight a thing of real beauty. Other men followed him, who made light-weight earthenware glazed with salt. Each man added something to the process, but Dwight deserves the



Salt-Glaze pitcher, "Sportive Innocence"



Lamberth stoneware, "The Fox Hunt"



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credit of being the leader. It is not claimed for him that he invented salt glazing, but he caused a crude and uninteresting method to become a means of attaining real beauty.

A notable vessel made by Dwight was the Greybeard or Bellarmin. First imported from the Continent, these vessels were afterwards made extensively in Fulham. They retained their distinctive name, derisively given in reference to Cardinal Bellarmin, who had, by his persecution of the Reformers in the Low Countries, brought upon himself the dislike of the Protestants. The usual form of the jug is a round corpulent body with a small neck, upon the front of which is a grotesque bearded mask. This suggested to some wag, says Binns, a likeness of the obnoxious Cardinal, and the name, once given, clung.

It is not possible for many American collectors to own old Fulham stoneware, but it is quite possible to possess Lambeth stoneware which in point of time followed closely on the earlier kind, and the latter is full of interest, particularly in the form of hunting jugs and pitchers of which one of my illustrations is a good example. This pitcher or jug—jug it always is in England—is of shaded brown and is ornamented by small, but extremely spirited

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hounds chasing an imaginary fox. This pattern has been reproduced and it is possible, or was a few years ago, to buy pitchers thus adorned in several sizes, likewise mugs. For porch and general country house use they were most effective, and it is quite probable they could now be secured. As collectors' pieces they would have no value, unless one cared to keep a reproduction as a sample until an old one could be found.

From Nottingham, Bristol, and Chesterfield also came fine brown stoneware, and coming to a later day in our own country, such wares as Rockingham may be mentioned. Of all stoneware none is so well known or so attractive to the average collector as salt-glaze, and it may be found, purchased, and placed in a cabinet by all who give sufficient time to the quest. Salt-glaze is a general term applied to a fine stone and earthenware glazed with salt, the latter usually presenting a surface like polished ivory. It was made at many potteries, and inasmuch as few marks are found, identification is almost impossible. At Leeds this ware was produced in great quantities and is often found in this country in the shape of pierced dishes of fascinating pattern and color. "*All the potters made salt glaze during the salt glaze period,*" says an English writer,

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and if this is true the list is a long one. This period is roughly assigned to the years 1700 to 1800, a span long enough to include England's greatest achievements in ceramics.

It would be difficult to say to whom belonged the honor of originating salt-glaze, for several potters seemed to be making it simultaneously, and who invented and who copied is hard to tell. But inasmuch as this method of treating pottery had long been known in Germany it can hardly be claimed as an English invention. Rather it was one of those memorable re-discoveries which illuminate the pottery world from time to time and make its history so fascinating.

Wedgwood made salt-glaze and several beautiful specimens are extant with his mark, and earlier men, like Elers, Twyford and Astbury, were especially successful in this line, the latter adding several decided improvements in glaze and paste. The Elers were Dutch potters who settled in England during the reign of William and Mary, and whose influence was marked on native work. To Astbury is given the credit of first using a fine white clay from Devonshire, thereby giving the body of the ware a lighter appearance. The first paste was a light drab and when found to-day is greatly prized.

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Later came the ivory period, most attractive of all, and next the decorated period, one style having an incised decoration with blue powder dusted into the incisions, and another with painted enamel-colors on a polished surface. Old salt-glaze is interesting, and a collection devoted to that ware alone could be made extremely varied.

In Liverpool, city of docks and potteries, salt-glaze was made at an early date and later an improved cream earthenware which was decorated with small landscapes in black; not the famous "Liverpool ware," best known in this country by commemorative mugs and pitchers, but a smaller output consisting of teasetts and other table china.

Early salt-glaze is difficult to find, but there are later and excellent specimens to be had if enthusiasm be not lacking. Good things are rather difficult to secure in all lines to-day, and the mountain will never come to Mahomet. But the unexpected often happens and it would be an unlucky collector who did not sooner or later find the very article he wanted. It might, therefore, be well to set your heart on one of those early pitchers of crouch clay glazed with salt and decorated with a crude picture of children at play, and having by way of further coloring, raised lines in green, blue, and orange.



Wheildon teapots
in combed and
agate wares, made
about 1740. A dark
and a light slip
are blended in
order to produce
a mottled effect



Wheildon plates in
tortoise shell. In this
famous old ware the
coloring matter is ap-
plied to the glaze, one
clay only being used.
The finest Wheildon
pieces are in tortoise
shell

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Alice Morse Earle, in her delightful china book, states that she knows of six at least, and the writer knows of one, located in the Franklin hills of Massachusetts. It is not what could be called a "proof piece," having a network of cracks and showing in several places broad lines of cement, darkened by time to a rusty brown, for even the cracks are old. It ornaments a walnut whatnot, together with sea shells, bits of coral and old daguerreotypes, and is valued beyond price on account of its association with a little child long since dead. It is a pathetic story and one that is heard in variation in many New England farm houses. A rag doll and a lead teaset and a small hair-trunk full of toys are also treasured, but not so much as this pitcher which has no value to the owners beyond that of association. Several china-hunters have tried to buy it, but fortunately none has succeeded and it is hoped that none ever will. "Sportive Innocence" is its title. Perhaps the six pitchers Mrs. Earle mentioned have no such pathetic history and could be purchased with a light conscience.

The following summary of the periods into which the history of salt-glaze may be conveniently divided is given by an early writer:

Period I.—Prior to 1720.—Impressed and ap-

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plied ornament on engine-turned vessels: archaic period.

Period II.—1720 to 1740.—Flint introduced into the body: fine sharp work.

Period III.—1740 to 1760.—Extensive use of colored enamels in decorating the salt-glazed surface.

Period IV.—1760 to 1780.—Prevalent ornamentation of basket and pierced work. This final class is the one familiar to collectors in this country.

Wedgwood's early experiments in the making of majolica resulted in many beautiful articles on lines quite different from his other achievements. Here the surface was highly glazed. The combed and agate wares belong to this period, although many of the pieces were without decoration of any kind. Seldom do we find to-day any of the combed ware of Wedgwood or Weildon, although we do occasionally see the attractive cauliflower ware made by the latter. Here the decorations are in relief, but not applied as in jasper ware.

On quite different lines are the specimens where one clay is superimposed on another and then both body and appliqué glazed. The Eler brothers were early in the field with work of this type. "Raised

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work" they called it and very charming it was. Thomas Astbury feigned idiocy in order to gain access to certain parts of the pottery owned by the Elers, where none but the owners ever entered. When he had learned all that he wished he disappeared and recovered his mind sufficiently to open a rival pottery. The Dutch brothers had perhaps paved the way for his duplicity by saying that half-witted apprentices were preferred. Astbury carried his work to a high degree of beauty, surpassing in many ways the work of his foreign employers.

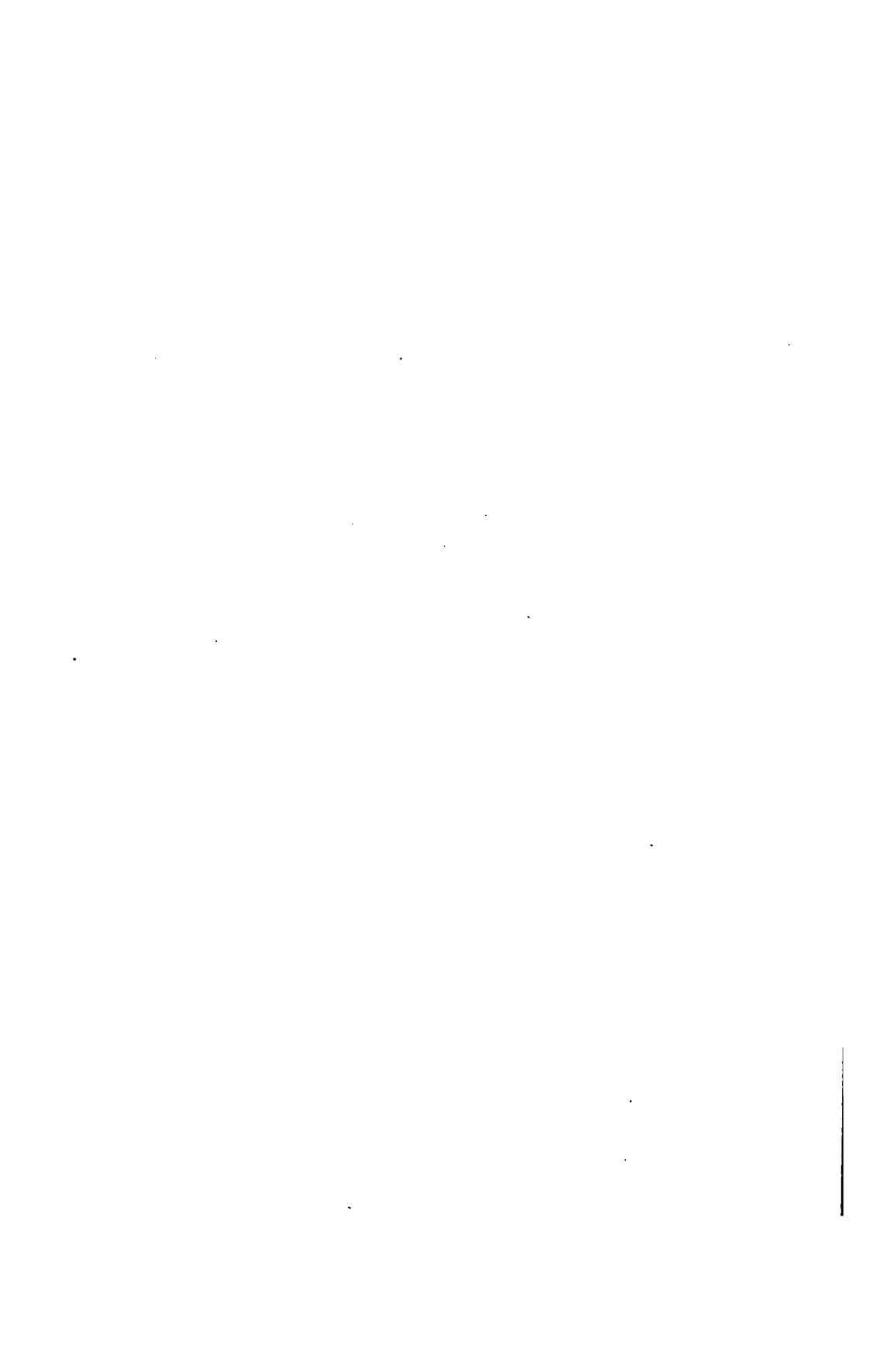
The Elers were particularly successful in their experiments in red clay; Astbury used with marked success a grayish white clay which later potters succeeded in making pure white. But the earlier so-called white wares, really deep cream or lightest gray are very interesting to many collectors. Potters in the early days of the eighteenth century were trying to secure true white. As technical knowledge progressed the clear, pure white was attained, but a certain beauty was lost. All these early wares were pottery, for china had not yet been made in England. Thomas Frye of Bow had the proud distinction of first making real porcelain, but Duesbury of Derby, and Sprimont of Chelsea soon followed in his steps.

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In relief decorations, would first mention Toftware, then the work of the Elers, and of Astbury and Twyford, many of the salt-glaze experiments, than Wedgwood and his brilliant contemporaries, Adams, Turner and Alcock. But there are many other interpretations of the theme, and the suggestions here are merely indicative of what one would find if seriously interested in this field.

The lusters offer much that is attractive in relief work. Many charming pitchers and bowls are yet to be found, in which flowers and sprays are powdered over the surface. These, with early nineteenth century specimens in the way of white china with raised flowers in green or lavender are the things most commonly found. Most collectors in this country are more interested in printed china.

Pitchers and jugs, more than any other articles, show the charms of relief-work. The best efforts of the potter were put into large ornamental pitchers, which by their size and outline were well adapted to display a bold decoration. Collectors of pitchers claim this for their hobby and point out that teapots, while charming in themselves, do not have the decorative quality of pitchers. Another feature which they emphasize is that a pitcher collection may be taken care of with comparative ease.





Salt-Glaze, pierced process



Salt-Glaze, basket-work

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"Pitchers are so safely hung," says one enthusiast. Like mugs they take kindly to hooks. Finally they are seldom as expensive as either plates or teapots, and a modest sum of money, combined with a large amount of zeal, will go a long way toward securing a very satisfactory showing.

THOMAS·TOFT
RALPH·TOFT
WROTHAM



CHAPTER V

A SHELF OF EARTHENWARE

“LEEDS” has a commercial sound, and, like Manchester and Birmingham, suggests machinery rather than china. Yet a beautiful old ware takes its name from this prosperous Yorkshire city, and if less famous than Wedgwood, Bristol, and Worcester is well worth consideration.

Many kinds of pottery were made at Leeds, but the type *par excellence* was of deep ivory color, pierced and incised but seldom decorated. Fruit-baskets and low dishes with openwork borders are among the most desirable pieces. Leeds potters also copied other wares, particularly Bristol, and as they seldom used marks much confusion arose later. During the past ten years, many pieces long believed to be Bristol have been identified as Leeds. The

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fact that a piece of china is decorated in the Bristol manner is no longer a guarantee that it was made in the city of Bristol. The Bristol mark, of course, leaves no room for doubt, but again the point arises that a good deal of Bristol was not marked. And so it seems that old china is full of puzzles, and that the Lowestoft enigma is but one of many.

A frequent Leeds type is of grayish white paste, with a narrow crinkly border in blue or green. Plates, platters, and pepper-boxes are found thus decorated, and are often believed by their owners to be of great age. Three hundred and fifty years is the age limit placed upon some of these century-old platters by proud country owners.

In 1760 "Leeds," as we know it, was first made, so by the greatest stretch of imagination no piece can be more than one hundred and fifty-two years old. Two brothers named Green opened a factory at that date. In 1775 the firm was Humble, Green, & Co., and nine years later Mr. William Hartley was taken into partnership and the firm became Hartley, Green, & Co. Other potters of Yorkshire adopted the name *Leeds*, and thus added to the general confusion. Among the wares attributed to the various factories are, first of all, the attractive cream ware already mentioned, black and white transfer

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ware, copper and silver lusters, and a variety of decorated china. Some of the decorated pieces show scattered flowers, and the simple borders so often found on Bristol. Mugs, teapots, jugs of every possible variety, and all manner of baskets and fruit-dishes are among the patterns. Teapots are small and usually very graceful. A rare type has spiral flutings with a swan on the cover instead of a knob. A more common style has a fluted base with short graceful spout, a high handle, and a fluted cover. The swan teapot is often embellished with small sprigs of flowers, but the latter type is plain and seldom has any decoration except a few touches of gold, which look as if placed there by mistake—as if an undecorated teapot was accidentally splashed with the gold intended for another piece of china.

A collection of Leeds, if it were made to represent all types, could be varied enough to suit the tastes of the most catholic. It would include copper and silver luster pitchers and bowls, high milk-jugs in flower decorations, small teapots ornamented with little sprays of flowers, an English rendering of the Chantilly sprig, sugar-bowls of fascinating shape—quite round with little flat covers, small pitchers, milk-cups as they were called then, and are still in



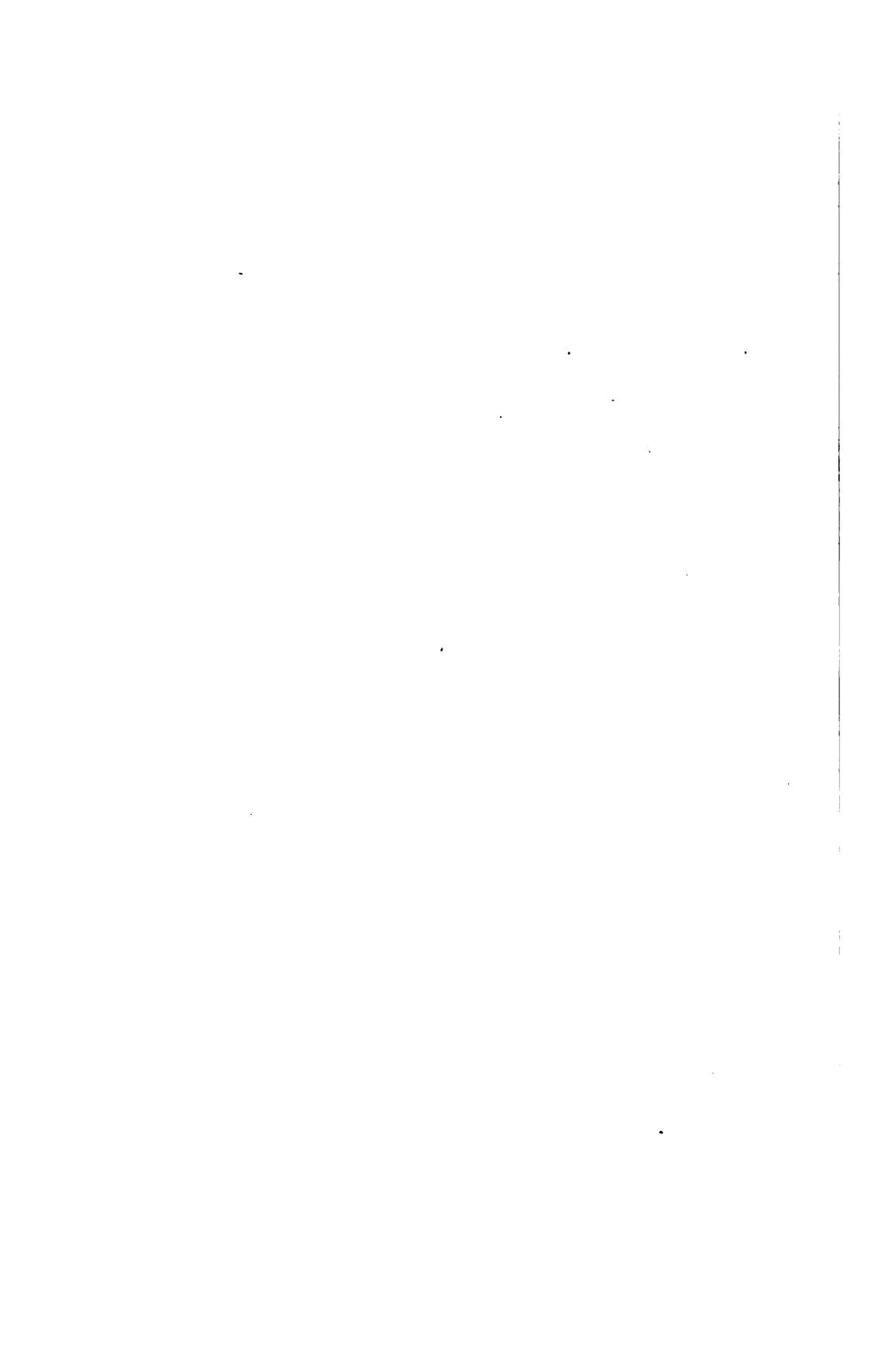
Leeds coffee pot, similar to Bristol in decoration



Leeds sauce-boat and pepper-box



Typical pieces of Leeds in ivory paste bordered with dark blue



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some rustic places, and best of all the pierced cream ware, which was cut by hand and seldom made in molds. Some of this ware looks as if made of clay which was first rolled into "ropes" and then "built up," much as Indian pottery was made by primitive tribes, as children model in many kindergartens, as confectioners work in sugar and cooks in pie crust.

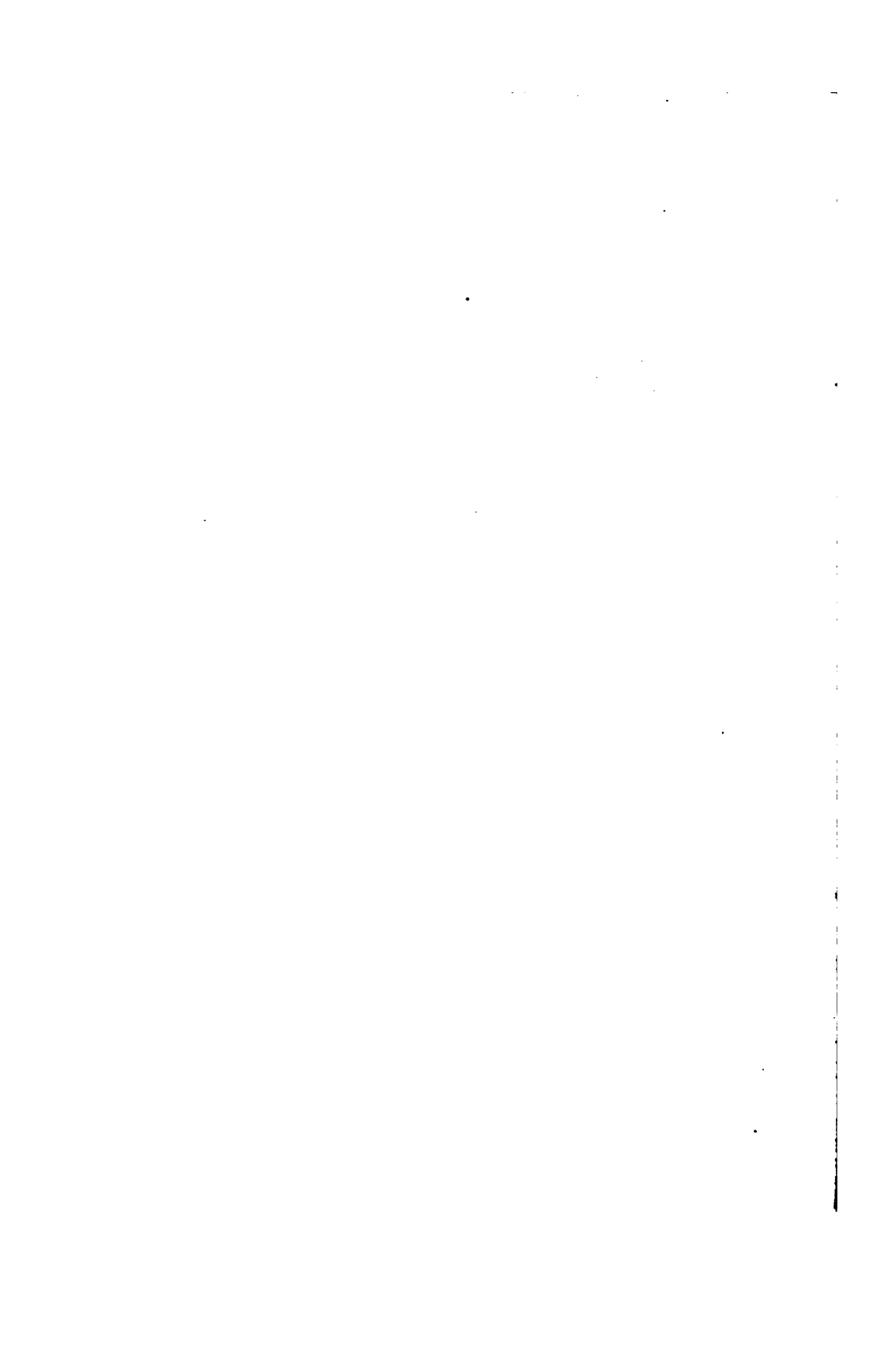
Mrs. Willoughby Hodgson is authority for saying that a great deal of Leeds was shipped to Russia because it was found that it could stand the Russian climate. This is so interesting that we wish there were more. Was it because it was so porous? Surely not because it was so durable. It was extremely fragile, and the wonder is that so much has been preserved. And how was it transported so safely? Verily, there is more in old china than appears on the surface.

The average collector in hunting for Leeds will, if he make New England the exploring place, find little of the coveted cream ware. Teapots and milk-cups with orange and brown bands and small Chantilly sprigs will be found occasionally, also pepper-boxes and plates and platters with vivid green or blue borders. Milk-cups especially will bear investigation. One does not often hear this term outside of New England but in many farm-

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houses this word is used for small milk pitchers, no matter how modern their origin. The original milk-cup was, as its name implies, a cup for milk. It differed from a cup, however, and also from a pitcher. It was a cross between the two, also it was a little like a mug. Its nose was really no nose at all, merely a slight point made in the wet clay. Its handle was "cuppish" but high. It had no saucer. Old milk-cups are very uncommon. To my knowledge, no one has ever specialized on this particular thing. Two only have come to my notice, one Bristol, the other Leeds, both strikingly alike with their grayish ivory paste and small sprigs of flowers.

Castleford, like Jackfield, takes its name from a place, not a person. Less renowned than the famous dark pottery, it has many claims to consideration and is especially interesting from its similarity to Wedgwood. Little has been written about Castleford, and often the owners of beautiful specimens have very vague ideas as to its origin. While resembling Wedgwood, it is in no way an imitation and has enough individuality to stand on its own merits. It is usually of an ivory white, not so warm in tint as the Queen's ware, but deeper in tone than Wedgwood's white jasper. The decorations are in





Castleford teapot made by David Dunderdale, late eighteenth century



An early example of Wedgwood in glazed earthenware

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relief, often in self color, and remarkably well executed.

The teapot illustrated here is of a charming ivory tone, the decoration being sufficiently in relief to make an agreeable effect of light and shade. In shape it is long and low, a design favored by potters of the late eighteenth century. With the coming of the nineteenth, different patterns came into vogue. The long, low teapot gave place through gradual changes to the high narrow one which is seen in modification in the brown mottled ware teapot; a teapot, by the way, standing at this very moment on the "back" of countless stoves all through New England, and a very good pot it is for making tea, far better than the tin pot which at one time replaced it,—a circumstance to make a tea drinker shudder, for no more poisonous combination could be imagined than tin and tea.

It was in 1790 that David Dunderdale began his work at Castleford, twelve miles from Leeds. Both cream-colored and black wares were made, the latter being a successful copy of Wedgwood's famous basaltes. Most of this output was for foreign markets and does not often turn up in an American collection. The white ware is the Castleford known in this country and in England. To Spain went

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most of Dunderdale's black pottery, and in Spain it is frequently found, where, with the precarious fate that often overtakes old wares, it is called "Black Moorish."

David Dunderdale does not appear to have suffered the poverty of many of England's potters. He had money in the beginning and did not lose it through his various experiments. Some of his critics have attributed his prosperity to the fact that he copied, instead of originating, and that he was content to follow another man's methods rather than to invent his own. Dunderdale has had rather unfair treatment on the whole. Both Turner and Adams imitated Wedgwood with far greater artistic success; Turner so cleverly that some of his best specimens have several times passed for genuine Wedgwood pieces, yet both potters escaped the hostile criticism heaped upon Dunderdale. The Castleford man made a great deal of money. Turner and Adams were several times in their careers "pottery poor," and possibly his prosperity and his three big ships plying back and forth between England and Spain and England and the Orient interfered with his popularity with his impecunious fellow-potters. In 1821 the Castleford works were closed. Later, under different management, they



White pitcher with purple luster bands



Copper luster, yellow decorations



Copper luster, "Mother and Child"



Copper luster, pink decorations

Staffordshire and Brislington

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were reopened, but instead of the old attractive pieces, a crude earthenware was made, quite different from anything Dunderdale had attempted and of slight interest to collectors.

Dunderdale in his earlier pieces often used a line of color to outline different sections or panels of his relief work. Several teapots in American collections show a line of deep cobalt blue. One teapot is recalled where the panels are outlined in light green and where, instead of a floral relief, scenes from Bible history form the decoration.

To many collectors, silver and copper lusters have a fascination unequaled by any other ware. They buy lusters because they cannot help it. The brown gleam of one and the gray sheen of the other have the same charm for them that unset gems have for many people. It is the color that counts. Lovers of lusters are colorists, incidentally collectors.

The luster family is a large one and includes early Italian and Spanish specimens and later English examples. Among Italian lusters those of Gubbio, Urbino, and Siena were famous during the fifteenth century. Gubbio ware made by Georgio Andreoli ranks as one of the great achievements of a century famous for its pottery. This remarkable artist brought to perfection a ruby glaze which has never

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been surpassed. It bears the name of the city in which it was made, not that of the maker—a pity, inasmuch as it was created by the genius of one man. Andreoli lived from 1492 to 1537, during Italy's great epoch of sculpture, painting, metal work and pottery. He was a contemporary of Giovanni and of Luca della Robbia, the younger.

Of Hispano-Moresque much has been written. The secret of its making was carried from Egypt into Spain by the Moors. At an earlier period this same secret traveled from Persia to Egypt, where it flourished in Fustal, the ancient city of Cairo. There is something decidedly Persian about Spanish luster. Not only are Persian patterns plainly discernible, but the characteristic combinations of blue and green, found in many old Persian tiles, are seen in countless numbers in this Moorish ware.

The collector of to-day will hardly hope to add Italian and Spanish lusters to his shelves and will content himself with visits to museums, confining his purchases to copper and silver pieces of English make.

English lusters are less brilliant than those of Spain and Italy, befitting a colder race and climate. Wedgwood's gold luster is exquisite, his silver lusters are the finest of their kind, and after Wedg-

A SHELF OF EARTHENWARE

wood specimens come New Hall, Brislington and the host of unmarked pieces conveniently classed as Staffordshire. Inasmuch as Staffordshire county includes innumerable potteries the characterization is undoubtedly correct. Most of the copper and silver lusters are without marks, and definite classification is impossible.

Early silver luster is similar in design to contemporary silverware, and it is quite probable that the potters used the discarded molds of the silversmiths. Among the most desirable pieces are fluted teaset, known as Queen Anne which are beautiful in texture and design. Beakers and goblets are sometimes found in silver tones, but they are less interesting than tea-services and are not nearly so valuable. At one time silver luster sets were considered almost priceless, but at the present time copper luster, if of the finest grade, is more in demand. This assertion does not refer to mugs, jugs and cider-pitchers of plain or flowered luster, but to creamers of the Queen Anne variety, to beakers and loving cups, and to the rare teapots. The color of the luster also counts. When the ware is almost as dark as Jackfield, it does not compare in value with the golden pieces. Again, weight is a consideration. The lighter the specimen the more desirable.

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A collection of copper luster arranged on shallow shelves where every piece catches the light, is a sight to awaken the admiration of the unenthusiastic. The play of color is more extensive than in a collection of burnished coppers, for the variety of tone is greater. Copper luster ranges from a deep brown, almost black, up to a light golden color, with a host of intervening shades, tones, and tints. There are plain lusters, banded lusters, powdered lusters, flowered lusters, and lusters which yet remain unclassified.

The real charm of copper luster is difficult to define. It has a human quality beyond many costly porcelains. If china has "temperament" surely this glowing, sparkling old ware possesses it.

It has been claimed that Wedgwood was the first potter to make silver luster, but this theory is open to question. Luster ware, in a general way, is almost as old as pottery making. The Orientals have been familiar with it for centuries, while the Spanish and Italians have long been famous for the brilliancy of their silver enamels. Tin enamel, carried to a high point of brilliancy, becomes a luster, and the points of distinction are too fine for the average collector to fathom. Whether the brilliancy of his jug were attained by a fusing of



Part of a copper luster collection owned by Mrs. Charles H. Sheldon, Radlett,
Hertfordshire. Gathered in England and America

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silicious materials with soda and potash, or the blending of a vitreous flux with oxid of tin are not matters of vital importance to the usual china-hunter. He is interested in the size, shape, color, decoration, and proof condition of his piece, and, in a limited way, is glad to know its history—its pottery history, be it said. Its individual history—its career, so to speak—is always of absorbing interest. To many collectors the “story” is of greater importance than the beauty of the specimen, or at least of equal consequence.

The true ceramic lover, however, while giving due weight to the story, cares less for farmhouse backgrounds and picturesque accessories than for the real worth of the piece in question, and such collectors, growing in numbers, are eager to know of pastes, glazes, marks, and imprints.

While copper luster is more beautiful in color, silver luster ranks higher when it comes to design. Many of the patterns found in silver luster are identical with those of old plate, and thus have a double interest. Occasionally one finds a creamer in copper tones which is of Georgian design, but this is an exception. Silver luster as a rule is more graceful in shape and shows a greater degree of skill in the modeling. It has been said that early silver luster

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was an imitation of silver, and was sold to those who were unable to afford the metal. To this end, pieces were lined with luster in order to make the deception complete. But the brilliancy of luster is so much greater than that of silver that there is little foundation for the tradition. It is probable that potters realized the value of this ware as a substitute for sterling and that housewives appreciated the importance of a silver-suggesting pottery.

Wedgwood's silver luster, like everything else that came from his hand, is perfect of its kind. There is a soft sheen to his ware which approaches the tone of silver more nearly than any other luster. It has the look of being hand polished and never looks "tinny," as some luster undoubtedly does. In high grade pieces the pottery foundation is light in weight and the coating after years of use shows no discoloration. Other and coarser pieces have a less even coating and are brown at the edges.

Platinum formed the base of the best silver glazes, and to-day platinum pieces are almost as attractive as when they left the hand of the potter.

Many beautiful pieces of the silver luster may be picked up in this country. The choicest tea service I have ever seen is in a New England cupboard; and in a Beacon Street shop I saw, not long ago, the finest

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collection of teapots of my china experience. But for luster of all kinds and patterns the London shops will hold the greatest surprises. Scotland should not be overlooked; and a visit to Ireland, particularly to the "second hand market" of Belfast will open up the unexpected in both silver and copper.

Mottled luster was made only in Sunderland, but silver was produced at many potteries. Etruria, New Hall, Swansea, Brislington, are some of the known places of manufacture. Usually a foundation of brown pottery was covered with an even coat of dissolved platinum. One mode of decoration was outlined on a white body and covered with some material which would not absorb the coating. The exposed part was then coated and when dry the decoration was uncovered and the result was a pitcher, teapot, or mug with a beautiful clear white pattern traced on a silver background. The silver "resisted" the covered portion of the clay—hence the name "Resist" for silver background outlined in white.

Mr. Arthur Hayden gives this advice to collectors: "Do not wash your specimens any more than you can help, as warm water has a deleterious effect on the luster and tends to make it less brilliant. We recommend collectors to polish their luster ware with

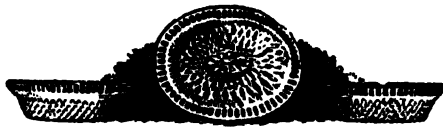
BY-PATHS IN COLLECTING

a soft cloth. Treat the ware kindly—it will never come again.”

Purple and pink lusters are very much alike, and to many people the difference is scarcely perceptible, except in pieces of New Hall, where the metallic decoration shows little trace of rose color. Collectors of old china, particularly of cups and saucers, will doubtless number among their specimens a delicate white ware, decorated in black landscapes, hunting scenes, etc., with narrow bands of metallic purple. Occasionally the decoration is printed in purple, but more often this color appears only in the luster.

Pink luster will greet the lover of old wares in many New England towns. Teapots show graceful outlines, similar to Staffordshire designs, bordered with bands of softly burnished color.

The luster family is an extensive one when all the types are taken into consideration. For real beauty of color few other wares can approach it.





Silver luster in "resist" decoration



White earthenware, style of the Eler brothers



CHAPTER VI

THE CABINET OF PORCELAIN

NO term inspires the collector more than "Old Chelsea." Lace ruffles and powdered hair, shoe-buckles and patches, sedan chairs and painted coaches flash before the eye—also slender legged cabinets filled with porcelain statuettes decked out in the finery of real lords and ladies. These bits of potter's clay are quite as typical of the eighteenth century as the prints and portraits which we now so greatly cherish. It is the aristocracy of Chelsea that appeals to us, just as do the dear plebeian qualities of other wares. One or two pieces are quite sufficient for the average collection and the average purse, but these are really necessary for the real happiness of the catholic collector. If one's collecting runs to a particular object, pitchers, bowls, teapots or plates, the call of the Chelsea statuette will not be insistent—or at least, less so than if the collecting mania be more general. The catholic collector has not had his just due in this day of special-

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ization, but he has recently been championed so delightfully by one J. J. Jennings that at the risk of wandering a little from Chelsea dairymaid and shepherdess—really fine ladies in masquerade—I repeat some of his sentences.

“The every-day collector, who picks up a scarce mezzotint, an eighteenth-century Sèvres vase, a sixteenth-century Urbino dish or a quaint example of old Dieppe ivory; an antique oak dresser or a genuine porringer in repoussé silver; a fan painted by Watteau or an original Rowlandson, is the man who makes his house interesting, without turning it into a twenty-fifth rate museum. (In America this man could hardly be called ‘every day.’ If the combination ran: ‘a pewter teapot, marked Dixon, a blue Lafayette plate, a pair of brass candlesticks, a mahogany bureau, and a copper luster sugar-bowl’ it would be more lifelike.) Strictly speaking, he is not a collector; he would be more correctly classed as a bric-à-brac hunter. The orthodox collector who specializes would look askance at him. Specialism is all very well, but it is rather a tax upon one’s powers of appreciation. Old Staffordshire ware is quaint and attractive; but when your friend has nothing but Staffordshire ware cottages or toby jugs to show you, your mental attitude towards his en-



"The Music Lesson," Chelsea; of the best statuette period.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

THE CABINET OF PORCELAIN

thusiasm becomes one of mild rebellion. The miscellaneous collector, if he has been wisely inspired, and has bought with taste and judgment, allures you with a wider range, and detains you by the variety of interests which he is able to evoke.

"But catholicity of adventure in acquiring antiques must be governed by settled principles. Their gathering in should be regulated by three rules—the antiques should be genuine, in perfect condition, and decorative."

And this brings us back to the Chelsea figures which usually have plenty of decorative quality—particularly, if from the hand of Sprimont. Nicholas Sprimont is the first name of prominence to be associated with Chelsea. We find that he was director of the works in 1750 and later the proprietor. This date is an important one in the history of English pottery making. It is close to the beginning of Worcester and of Derby, a little later than that of Bow, a little earlier than that of Plymouth and Bristol.

The earliest Chelsea was blue and white in the Chinese manner and was unmarked. Later an anchor made its appearance and is found on most of the marked pieces. The anchor was a favorite with English potters. It was used by Thomas Frye of

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Bow and by Davenport, but it was at Chelsea that it was given special distinction. When the Chelsea anchor in gold is found, a prize is indeed in hand, and if it marks a dainty shepherdess, or dairy-maid, the cause for congratulation is great.

On a modern mantel the little Chelsea figures look strangely affected. The milkmaids and shepherdesses, flower-girls and fruit-venders, do not fit into the modern background. They must be placed behind the doors of a cabinet and grouped with their kind. No hit-or-miss gathering of teapots, bowls, and pitchers can be countenanced in the presence of these dainty people. Are they not *parlour* ornaments—parlor spelled with a “u.” The word “cabinet” is used instead of “cupboard.” A dear old corner cupboard is not aristocratic enough for such as these. A cabinet suggests slender proportions, glass doors, and perhaps a hint of marquetry.

The charming and famous “Music Lesson” in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, is a superb specimen of the elaborate type. It has, moreover, the “bosky” background particularly associated with the palmy days of Chelsea and now so highly prized. Bow figures seldom have this “bosky” effect, and as it does not appear in the same form in Derby-Chelsea, it is especially valued for its pure and simple

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"Chelsea" quality. Dresden figures often have a floral background, but we miss that particular pastoral flavor found in the real bosky. When groups with "boskies" come up for sale at Christie's, or other famous auction rooms, they bring high prices.

Notice in the "Music Lesson" the lace on the bodice of the lady-shepherdess and the richly embroidered undersleeves of the gentleman-shepherd. Even the lambs are nicely posed for the picture and suggest Berlin worsted rather than Southdown wool. These lambs are extremely fetching in the original, but the illustration does them faint justice. Also the background does not show forth in all its beauty. It is a marvelous piece of modeling, exquisite in color.

Many advertisements anent this famous ware have been preserved, and one of the last ones runs: "To be sold by auction, by Mr. Burnsall, on the premises, sometime in March next (1764) at the Chelsea Porcelain factory, everything in general belonging to it, and all the remaining unfinished pieces, glazed and unglazed, some imperfect, useful and ornamental, all the materials; the valuable and expensive variety of fine models in wax, in brass and in lead; the mills, kilns, and iron presses; together with all the fixtures of the different warehouses, likewise all the outbuildings."

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Wedgwood was interested and wrote to his partner, Thomas Bentley, "There is an immense amount of fine things," but it was not Wedgwood who finally made the purchase but Mr. William Duesbury of Derby. In 1769, the famous Derby works annexed the factory and Chelsea as "Chelsea" was known no more. Derby had already absorbed one small pottery and with the greater purchase it made even Worcester look to its laurels. A good deal of the first output after the merger was made of Derby paste cast in Chelsea models, and this period is not always easy of identification.

Dr. Johnson found time to experiment in making china, and chose the Chelsea works as the place most worthy of his efforts. It is said that once each week for several months he spent part of a day at the pottery, accompanied by a faithful servant. Little is known of his actual work, but he was heard to say later: "It is cheaper to buy Chelsea, although Heaven knows, it is as dear as silver."

The importance of Bow to the collecting world in general, lies in the fact that it was the first porcelain made in England, and as such it takes precedence of later and, from a technical standpoint, more perfect wares. Pottery had long been made in England, but *china* was unknown until 1744, when Bow

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was introduced. The period during which it was made was comparatively brief, for in 1776 the factory was purchased by William Duesbury and Bow as Bow was no longer known. But the recipes and formulae which became the property of Duesbury were used in the making of that early Derby which contains a hint of both Bow and Chelsea, and over which collectors wax so enthusiastic.

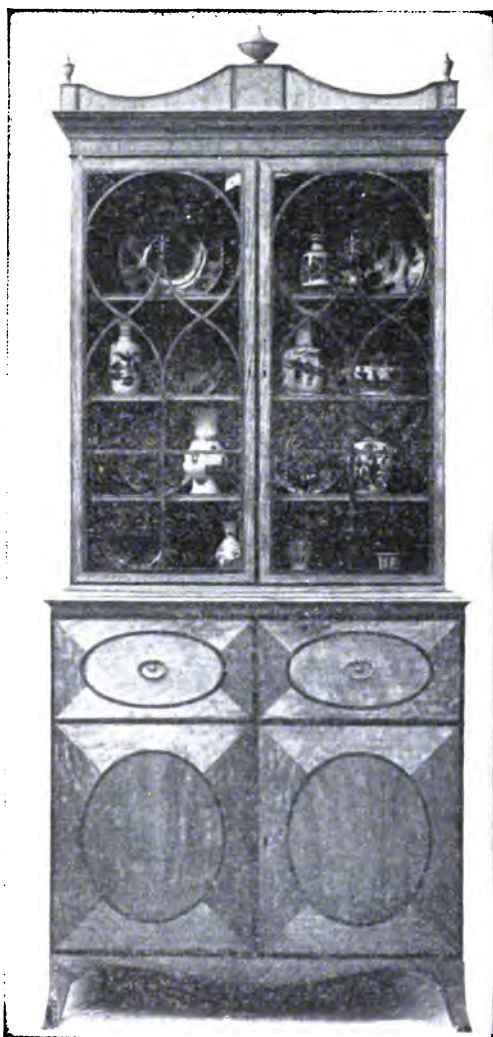
Bow is best known by figures and statuettes which differ from those of Chelsea and early Derby by that hair's breadth which means so much to collectors and so little to others. It is difficult to show the distinction by descriptions or photographs. Bow must be seen and felt for one to understand why and how it differs from the wares mentioned. From a technical standpoint it does not compare favorably with later china. It is full of bubbles, is porous and uneven of glaze. One of the earliest experiments in porcelain could hardly be expected to be flawless and these very imperfections make it extremely attractive. Stratford-le-Bow in Essex was the place of manufacture, and the site where the old building stood is now occupied by the match firm of Black and Ball. Not long ago a number of broken bits of china were unearthed beneath an old flooring and several new classifications were made. Patterns

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long attributed to other potteries were identified as Bow, and several ceramic adjustments took place. The discovery brought to light a greater variety of designs than had been credited to this pottery.

Bow has not escaped the controversy which has upset so many established ideas pertaining to English ceramics. The honor of making the first real porcelain in England, however, has never been taken from the factory, but much old china once attributed to Bow is now believed to be Chelsea, among other things the famous "goat creamers," charming little pitchers showing a diminutive goat in relief. Raised ornamentation was a feature of the Bow pottery at its best. The attractive little creamer, illustrated, in company with the pierced pickle leaf, is a typical specimen in outline and decoration.

Three dates are convenient to remember in regard to this early china industry. First, 1730, when a crude factory was established at Bow; second 1744, when Thomas Frye and Edward Heylin took out a patent. "New Canton" was the name given to the enterprise and is indicative of the Oriental tastes of the day; third, 1776, when William Duesbury of Derby purchased the Bow property, and the identity of the old ware was merged with that of the larger undertaking.



Sheraton Cabinet

THE CABINET OF PORCELAIN

A very interesting Bow specimen in the British Museum is known as the Craft bowl. The document which has accompanied this beautiful old piece for more than a hundred years has given more real information about the Bow works than many volumes on the subject.

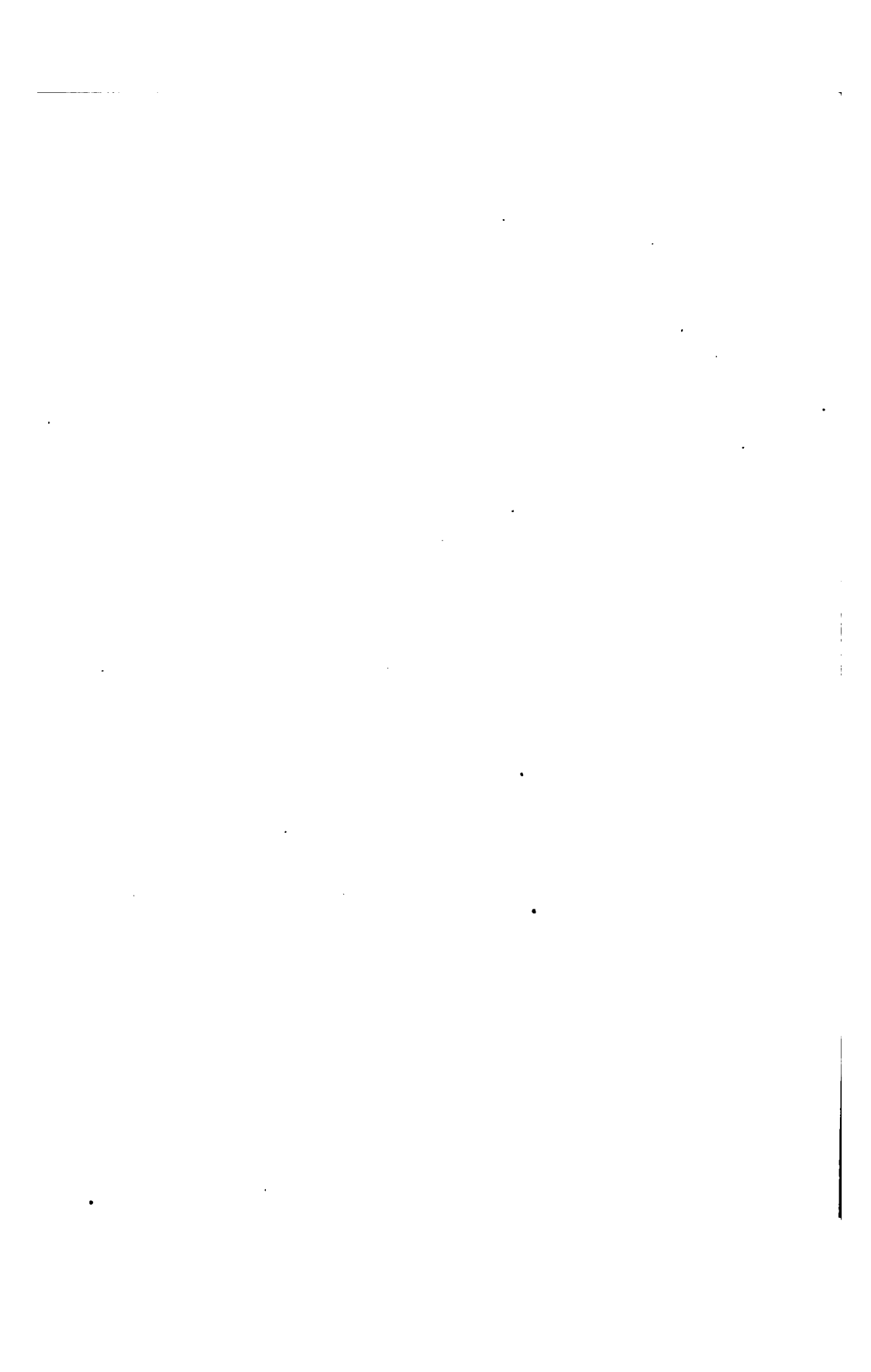
In a recent visit to London, I copied on the fly leaf of a catalogue as much of the document as the page would hold and hope to make another trip to complete the copy. Here it is in part, about two-thirds: "This bowl was made at Bow China Manufactory, at Stratford le Bow, in the county of Essex, about the year 1760, and painted there by Thomas Craft, myself, my cypher is in the bottom: it is painted in what we used to call the old Japan Taste, a taste at that time much esteemed by the then Duke of Argyle; there is near two penny weight of gold, about 15s. I had it in hand about three months, about two weeks' time was bestowed upon it, it could not have been manufacture for less than four pounds, there is not its similitude. I took it in a box to Kentish Town and had it burned there in Mr. Giles' Kiln, cost me three shillings. It was cracked the first time of using it; Miss Nancy Shay, a daughter of the late Sir Patrick Blake, was christened with it. I never use it but in particular respect to my com-

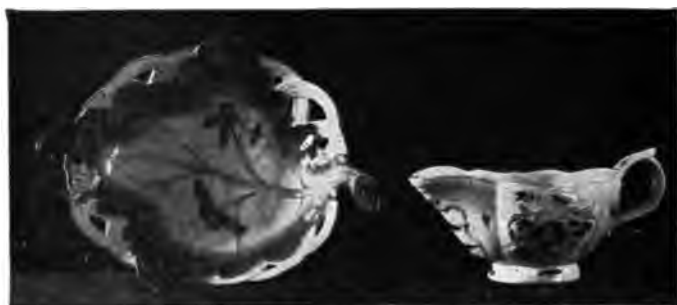
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pany, and I desire my legatee (as mentioned in my will) to do the same. Perhaps it may be thought I have said too much about this trifling toy, a reflection steals in upon my mind that this said Bowl may meet with the same fate that the manufactory where it was made has done, and like the famous cities of Troy, Carthage, etc., and similar to Shakespeare's Cloud-Capt Towers, etc. The above manufactory was carried on many years, under the firm of Messrs. Crother and Weatherby, whose names were known almost all over the world; they employed about 300 persons; about 90 painters (of whom I was one), and about 200 turners, throwers, etc., were employed under one roof. The model of the building was taken from Canton, in China, the whole was heated by two stoves."

Old Thomas Craft little realized how much assistance he was giving and that the document would in course of time be valued more than the bowl.

When the "Japanese taste" in china became popular at the English potteries some unique and extraordinary patterns were reproduced. While less important in a general way than the Chinese cult, its influence was far reaching. The best china painters of the day were tremendously Japanese and showed great cleverness in the blending and adapting of





Bow



Derby



Crown Derby

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well-known *motifs*. Unlike much of the "Chinese ware" produced in England, these "Japanese" pieces do not deceive. The questions, Where? Who? When? and Why? are never raised, for the British origin is unmistakable.

For many years in an old New England farmhouse there rested on a high pantry shelf a large platter which had the pleasing tradition of having come from China. It displayed a good deal of dark blue in the border, there was also a beautiful old red, not unlike that seen in Satsuma, there were other colors softly blended, and a little gold. But the most attractive thing about it was the exquisite color of the background—too light for ivory—too dark for white. No one seemed to care very much about it. Visiting antique dealers and amateur china hunters were loud in their praises of certain blue plates owned by the family which no amount of persuasion could win in a purchase. But apparently there was little interest in the old red platter, which in reality was a far greater prize than any of the old blue pieces, although a States plate was included in the latter. But the people who boarded in the old farmhouse summers or who came out of interest or curiosity to see the Staffordshire regarded the platter lightly, if they regarded it at all.

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Finally a young school teacher in the district—a city girl with a love of old things—saw it and was so enthusiastic about it that it was taken down and dusted and placed in the cupboard with the Staffordshire. She searched books and magazines and verified her belief that the platter was old Derby, and that it belonged to that brief output called “Japanese Rock,” one of the best of the Oriental patterns. Her enthusiasm quite impressed the farmer’s wife, who searched family history to find, if possible, how such a treasure had come into her possession. That it had belonged to a great-aunt she knew, but beyond that, very little, and the fact that all her dark blue crockery had been so lauded by everybody who came to the house led her to think that the platter was of little account. A few years later a dealer with a wider knowledge than many of his class bought the platter, giving a very fair price for it, and disposing of it later to a collector who made a specialty of old Derby. He had long been looking for a specimen of “Japanese Rock,” and the charming platter formed the desired link.

The history of the Derby works from beginning to end is one of great interest. The name of William Duesbury is particularly prominent and, like Sprimont of Chelsea, Frye of Bow, and John Dwight

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of Fulham, stands for real achievement. There were three William Duesburys, all potters and all workers at Derby. The first became connected with the Derby factory in 1755. The second entered the firm as his father's partner in 1785, and after the older man's death carried on the business, taking into partnership Mr. Michael Kean. The latter was a skilled painter and of real assistance in giving variety to Derby patterns. After the death of William Duesbury II, in 1798, Mr. Kean continued at the head of the business until the third William was old enough to succeed his father.

Under the first Duesbury the pottery achieved its greatest success. He it was who purchased the Bow and Chelsea factories, the former in 1776, the latter in 1769, thus becoming, according to Binns, a monopolist in English porcelain. A high standard of work was maintained and no imperfect pieces were sold. Duesbury, like Wedgwood, preferred to destroy rather than sell a poor article, thinking more of his reputation than his pocket-book. The grandson was not so particular and under Duesbury III the fame of Derby rapidly declined.

Bloor pieces, for a long time quite neglected in England, are now eagerly sought, and in this country, where classifications are less rigid, would per-

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haps be purchased in the belief that they were old Japanese patterns. In Bloor Derby—named for Robert Bloor, so long at the head of the works—there are often figures of men and women, occasionally fans and Japanese flowers, but seldom the well shaped decorative treatment of old “Rock Japan”—or other patterns used between 1773 and 1782—one of the best periods at Derby.

Japanese patterns were never used exclusively there. At the same time that they were in vogue many other interesting schemes were worked out at the pottery. There were the Chelsea pattern books and the Bow books, full of the beautiful *motifs* used at those factories. There were the combinations of Derby and Chelsea, which make such lively bidding among collectors to-day when they come under the hammer, there were French and Dresden schemes, which were more or less successful, suggestions rather than copies, and finally there were the patterns made to order by royal and other patrons. Any of these things found to-day have value, and within the past decade there has been a growing interest in Bloor specimens—which for a long time were considered of too recent make to be especially interesting. They were not eighteenth century and consequently too modern for serious consideration.



Worcester of the Wall period



Blue and white Worcester



Billingsley roses, Nantgarw and Swansea

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But with the coming of the twentieth century the reverence for the early nineteenth has steadily increased. The period is now far enough away to be "antique"—if we are not too literal in our use of the word.

Conditions in England are a little too remote for most American collectors. Fortunate ones who visit London return with great enthusiasm for the collections at South Kensington, in the British Museum, and most of all, in the wonderful shops. Thereafter, for a long time, blue Staffordshire seems painfully plebeian—just ordinary crockery—nothing more. It takes real devotion to the cause to be quite as charmed again with printed ware. Not that it is not decorative, not that it is not interesting, not that it is not expensive—but it lacks the grace, the beauty, the poetry of old Derby, Chelsea, Bow or Worcester.

Trips to England need not be made in order to find specimens of these great potteries. Like the old platter described, there are many pieces waiting to be discovered, not royal specimens, not the choicest ones by any means, but good things, well worth hunting. And to those collectors who are especially interested in Oriental influence as set forth in English ceramics, and who have specimens of Worcester in the Chinese

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manner, it would be more than worth while to hunt for Japanese Derby, whether of the Bloor period or of the late eighteenth century, for it is like unto nothing else in china, possessing beauty of color as well as unique decoration. Moreover, it belongs to that small output of china things which has never been imitated. Being an imitation in the first place, no modern potter has attempted to reproduce it.

Dr. Wall's name is associated with the origin of the Worcester pottery, and the date is placed at 1751. John Wall of Worcester was a man of many talents, a famous physician, a draughtsman of unusual ability, a painter of more than local reputation, and finally a potter. "Etching, glass staining and other fancies" are attributed to him. His fame as a practitioner has long since faded, his paintings are forgotten, but his china experiments, which he took up as a pastime, have made his name an enduring one in the pottery world. Had he given his own name to his ware instead of calling it Worcester, he would now be almost as famous as Wedgwood. As it is he ranks with Fry, Duesbury, and Sprimont.

Dr. Wall was assisted by a trained chemist, named William Davies, and a magazine editor, Mr. Edward Cave. The unusual combination of a medical man, an apothecary, and an editor working out problems

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in china proved very successful. This three-cornered undertaking proved more profitable than the projectors had dared hope. Dr. Wall provided the artistic grasp of the subject. He could draw masterly and had many theories anent clay modeling which he had long wished to put into practice. The chemist knew his craft well, and could supply necessary recipes. The editor's magazine furnished an acceptable advertising medium and so the combination, seemingly so incongruous, started out merrily. Derby had been founded a year or so before. Bow and Chelsea were in swaddling clothes.

Dr. Wall realized that he must out-Herod Herod in his venture, catch fashionable patronage, and win the more lasting favor of the middle classes. He did not make cheap china—and at first his prices were not lower than those asked for Oriental wares—but gradually he branched out into a different type of tableware which sustained the Worcester reputation, yet could be made at a lower figure than the so-called Mandarin pieces. Blue and white it all was, for that was the fancy of the moment, and to-day this beautiful old porcelain is dearly prized, whether Oriental or English in treatment.

The first ten years of Worcester's existence were really ten years of Dr. Wall's supremacy; and lovers

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of English porcelain regret that his name is not perpetuated in some way with that of Worcester. He could not foresee how highly valued his experiments would be considered by future generations, or what place he would be accorded in the history of ceramics. His early motives were partly commercial, as were most of his potting contemporaries. We do not know much about his personal history, but what information has come to light concerning him is extremely interesting.

Had he bestowed his name on the enterprise he would have had greater personal recognition, although it must be confessed that "Wall" would be a harsh and unattractive name for anything as adorable as old china; more so than "Spode" which, if ugly, is at least interesting. "Royal Wall" does not charm either, so perhaps it is as well to give this most varied of all English wares the name of its birthplace, rather than that of the man whose genius inspired it.

Worcester ware from the first made other potters look to their laurels. It was firm of body, even in glaze, and beautiful in decoration. It appeared a full-fledged china. Experimental pieces were either destroyed or kept as object lessons. They were not put up for sale. No wonder then that the first Wor-

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cester placed upon the market was pronounced Chinese. And it was extremely Chinese looking, so much so that blue and white pieces are to-day often confounded with Nankin. There was a green tinge to the china, quite unlike the tone of most porcelain produced in England, and the decorations were frankly copies of Oriental pieces. This blue and white porcelain is very valuable now, more so than old Nankin, although the latter is never cheap. When the "Japanese taste" in pottery made itself felt, Worcester quickly responded, and the china of this period has the lovely old reds seen in Satsuma. When the Chelsea works were purchased by the Derby factory many decorators sought employment at Worcester, and china of this date is surprisingly like Chelsea. About that time, English potters had forsaken, for a brief period, Chinese designs, and faithfully copied Sèvres porcelain with its rich grounds of apple-green, claret and royal-blue.

Dr. Wall died in 1776 and the first period of Worcester terminated. For twenty-five years this gifted man served Worcester, and his death, like that of Josiah Wedgwood, was deeply lamented. During this quarter century, a very important one in England's pottery history, Worcester ware passed through several phases. First came the "blue and

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white," a little later the "transfer" form of decoration, and then the imitation of Sèvres and Dresden, closely followed by the perfecting of the "scale" scheme of ornament, which harked back once more to things Chinese.

During this long period many marks were used. From 1751 to 1776, the letter "W" appears, which might have stood for either Wall or Worcester—possibly both. A crescent was also added in outline, also various initials and cyphers of individuals. "Transfer" or printed china was often marked with a solid crescent, and at one time a series of square marks similar to those found on Oriental china were adopted. The Worcester marks were numerous and often very confusing. All English potters were seized with one and the same idea, namely to have their ware mistaken for something other than it was. They imitated foreign decorations and foreign marks, hoping to give a false value to their china, and for a time the scheme worked well. To-day it is the English origin of those same pieces which makes them so valuable.

After the death of Dr. Wall the factory was without a director for seven years, but it suffered little. There seems never to have been a dearth of able men at Worcester. Two must have special

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mention, Donaldson and O'Neale, as they brought to perfection the beautiful pink, blue, and salmon scale pieces which are the glory of many English collections. They were painters, not potters, and when a piece from their hands is put up for sale, the bidding is extremely lively.

In 1783, Thomas Flight and his two sons purchased the Worcester works. Five years later the word "Royal" was added to the name of the ware and from that date the king gave the pottery his special patronage. Queen Charlotte was always a lover of china. Wedgwood's Queen's Ware was named for her and there are various patterns called in her honor.

In 1791, Mr. Martin Barr came to Worcester and pieces of this period are known as "Flight and Barr." There are several marks pertaining to this epoch. First the word "Flight," then "Flight" with a crown and a crescent, then "Flight and Barr" with the crown, and so on until Mr. Chamberlain became a member of the firm. Mr. Chamberlain had once been associated with the old pottery works and later separated from them, establishing a factory of his own. In 1840 the rival firms joined forces and were known as "Chamberlain & Co." China of this period is marked "Chamber-

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lain & Co." with a crown in the center of a circle. Changes were rapid after that. William Kerr entered the firm, and his name was incorporated in 1850. Two years later Mr. Chamberlain retired and Mr. Binns took his place, and the modern period of Royal Worcester was inaugurated.

"Pink scale" does not have a very attractive sound, and, except to the initiated, suggests anything but china. Rather it calls to mind the vegetable and animal kingdoms. But to the old potters "Scale" meant neither fish, flesh nor fowl, but an interesting decoration which flourished at Worcester. Like many other good things in ceramics, it came from China, although the English potters gave it a fame unknown in the land of its birth. "Blue scale" and "pink" or "salmon scale" are well-known china terms and, in many cases, are familiar to those who have never been so fortunate as to possess a single specimen.

To know Worcester scale at its best one must turn to tall vases and similar pieces which presented a surface large enough for the potter to obtain the desired effect. At Worcester, as at Sèvres, ornamental pieces, like mantel garnitures, were a specialty. Table china which would be subjected to soap and water and to the unavoidable wear of

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things actually used, naturally was not well adapted to rich golds and delicate blues and pinks, nor to elaborately painted birds and flowers. Occasionally tea and dinner services were most sumptuously painted, and to-day when any part thereof is put up for sale it commands a wider interest than the ornate mantel vases, though no fine Worcester piece is ever slighted.

For those who like to know the composition of their china pieces, the following may be interesting:

"Several bodies and glazes were used at Worcester. The first were no doubt very similar to those used at several of the English factories—namely, a fritted body containing a large proportion of glass and a soft, rich lead glaze. This body always presented difficulties in working, and later on experiments proved that the use of steatite or soapstone in place of clay would give more plasticity to the ware. This body was less transparent than the first, and the addition of steatite made it harder. The glaze used contained a proportion of ground china and oxid of tin, and was a slightly milky shade. This was the body and glaze used for the fine Worcester blue-and-white of the best period. The steatite, or soapstone, was brought from Cornwall, where the Worcester company leased two

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mines of this mineral. In the third body, bone ash was used, and between the years 1800 and 1810 the modern English body of bone ash, china stone, and china clay began to be used."

No other English ware offers such possibilities in the way of a diversified collection. Dresden alone can compete with it in the way of variety. A cabinet could be filled with pieces, no two alike in outline or decoration and not exhaust half the types. After the important periods were represented, special patterns like the "Lord Coventry" would claim consideration and the owner would be forced to buy a second cabinet in order to do full justice to his hobby.

During the eighteenth century, flower painters went from one pottery to another, which explains the similarity found in the floral decorations of a great deal of old china. Collectors are often puzzled by certain flowers, leaves, and sprays which appear on Derby, Pinxton, Coalport, Swansea, and Nantgarw. Many of these decorations were painted by the same hand, not a few by an eccentric person named Billingsley or "Beely" as the potters pronounced it.

Thomas Billingsley failed as a potter, but achieved fame as a painter of roses. In fact, the

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"Billingsley rose" is as familiar to collectors of English china as are the "Killarney" and the "Richmond" to florists. And the china roses are almost as natural as the real ones. Billingsley was not a painter of the conventionalized; he painted roses as they were, not as they ought to be. He cannot be called a designer, but as a flower painter pure and simple, he outranks Jean Robie, and our own Paul de Longprè. He painted with a good deal of breadth; with a remarkable sweep considering the time and the medium.

We first hear of the boy Billingsley at Derby, where he was apprenticed to Mr. Duesbury, who had recently purchased the Chelsea works and consolidated them with Derby. Billingsley was sixteen, and an apt pupil in everything pertaining to the making of china. His first work was crude, but contained a hint of something so fresh and unusual that Duesbury made every inducement to retain him, foreseeing that other potters would be only too glad to secure his services. At the end of five years, when his apprenticeship had expired, he was offered the position of head flower painter at Derby, which he filled with distinction until his roving spirit led him elsewhere. Derby china of this period contains, among other decorations, the

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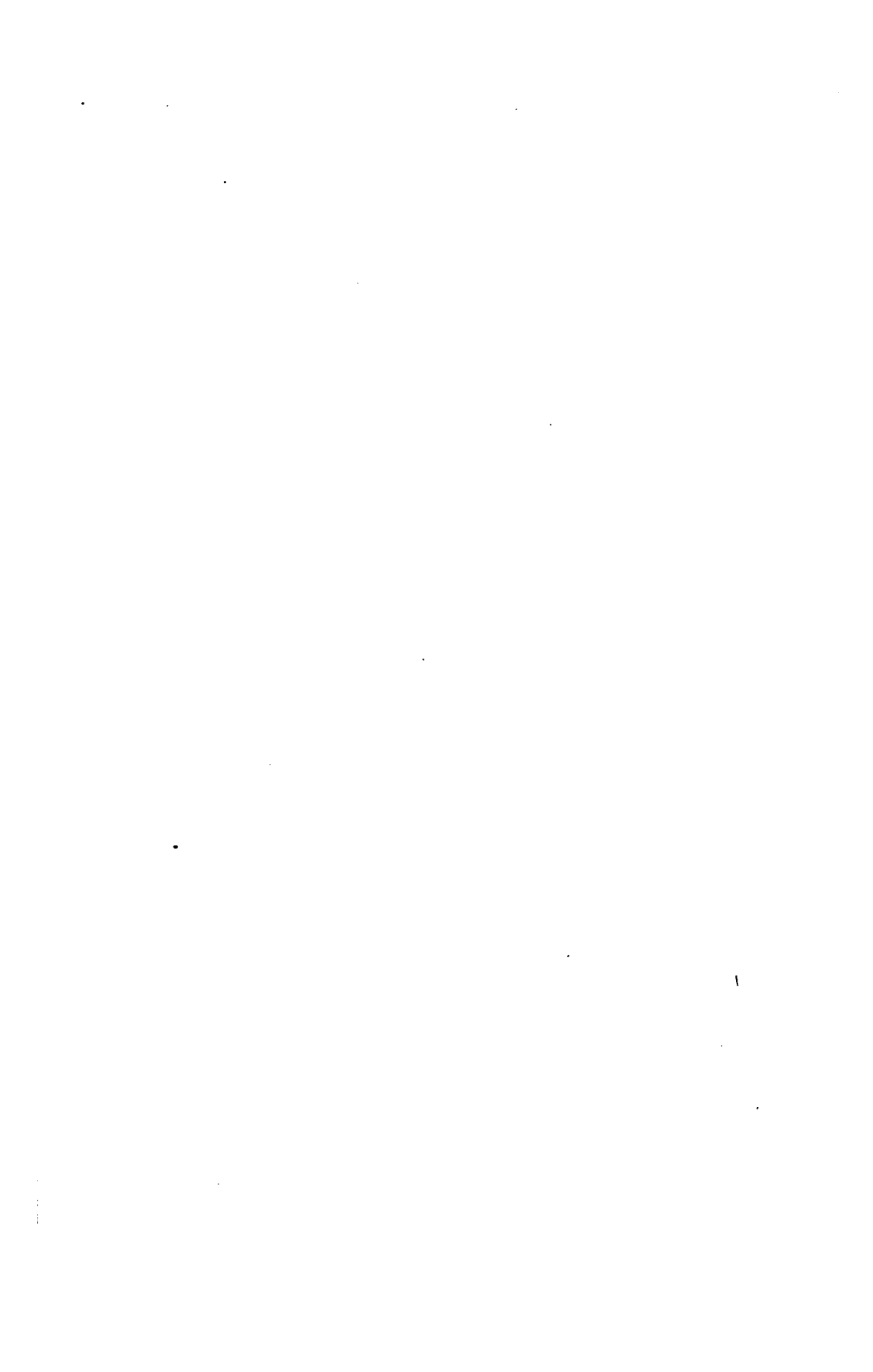
well known rose which had already made the young artist famous in England.

From Derby he went to Pinxton and established a pottery there. It was here that he commenced his experiments in soft paste porcelain, producing a ware which had the glassy consistency of Chelsea. But failure overtook the enterprise, and in a few years it was abandoned. Two other pottery ventures were undertaken and given up, and then T. Billingsley is found at Worcester, working under the Flight and Barr management. It was more than a quarter of a century since his entrance at Derby, and the Worcester pottery was the fifth on the Billingsley list. At this period, early nineteenth century, the Worcester works were enjoying a marked prosperity. Flight and Barr pieces are greatly prized by collectors, and none more so than those that contain the "Beely rose." By this time the artist had fully mastered his craft; not only were his roses known far and wide, but a type of rose had become so identified with him that pupils were instructed to paint in the "Billingsley manner." Old pattern books still exist at Worcester with his drawings, which have been copied from time to time with varying success.

Three years were devoted to the interests of Wor-



Old Worcester in Japanese Taste



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cester, then the potting fever again assailed him, and Nantgarw, Wales, became the field of his endeavors. Like most of his ventures it was a financial failure, though no one can deny the beauty of the ware which Billingsley helped to make. It had the smooth glassy surface which this painter of roses had always tried to achieve, but it was uneven in weight and often too fragile to stand high firing. Discouraged with failures, broken in health, he left Nantgarw at the end of three years and joined Mr. Dillwyn at Swansea. Here he was promised financial aid, freedom to go on experimenting, and in return was to decorate Swansea with roses and other flowers. Billingsley proved a poor partner. After four years of varied success, he and Dillwyn separated. He returned to Nantgarw, where he stayed two years, then went back to his roses, giving up his beloved experiments and becoming a decorator once more. Coalport now claimed him, and he remained at that pottery until his death, in 1828.

His china experiments are forgotten, but collectors will always cherish his roses. As time went on he painted with more freedom, and his late efforts are remarkable for their boldness. One stroke of the brush often constituted a petal, while some

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of the full-blown roses look as if executed with one great splash of color. Tempting offers came to him from French potteries, but we have no record of his acceptance. The work by which he is known he valued little.

Coalport china, decorated by Billingsley, is in the range of a well-filled purse, and Flight and Barr Worcester can be found if one hunts long enough. Derby pieces decorated with "Beely roses" are valuable, for they belong to the old period, and such specimens, no matter what the decoration, are extremely rare. These statements do not refer to "finds," which sometimes upset all theories as well as prices. If a blue Hawthorn jar could be purchased in a little Turkish shop in New York City for five dollars, and later valued at twenty-seven hundred by one of our finest museums, it is not impossible that one might buy a bit of Billingsley Derby for a few cents. On the theory of the blue jar, one should look for the Derby in the Chinese quarter of Mott Street or in a brass emporium in the Ghetto.





CHAPTER VII

CROSSED SWORDS

THE history of hard paste porcelain in Europe reads like a romance—a romance, however, with certain dark chapters. To understand what the discovery of true porcelain meant to potters, it is necessary to consider the meaning of hard paste and soft paste. The technical definition is not particularly simple. Porcelain, according to Solon, is the generic term employed to designate all kinds of pottery to which an incipient vitrification has been imparted by firing. This translucent pottery may be divided into two classes: first, hard paste, containing only natural elements in the body and the glaze. Second, soft paste, where the body is an artificial combination of various materials welded by the action of fire, in which the compound called a frit is a substitute for a natural rock. To this class belong the early Italian and French porcelains and

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the larger part of English china. The ingredients of hard porcelain are china stone and china clay; the former is a soft granite; the latter is identical with the kaolin of the Chinese, a name which has now been generally adopted in Europe.

Soft paste is altogether different. The frit alluded to is a mixture of sand and alkali which has been submitted to a sufficient heat to cause the two to unite. This mixture is crushed and mingled with certain other substances, including a clay, to give some slight plasticity, and when the required articles are made they are subjected to sufficient heat to cause a certain amount of fusion. It will thus be seen, adds Binns, that soft paste is only a clever makeshift. In the absence of the true constituents, the potters made the best of the circumstances and so well did they succeed that the soft porcelain exceeds the hard in beauty.

The grace and charm of soft paste, Sèvres, to mention one famous ware, need little emphasis, while the attractiveness of Bow, so soft that it may easily be scarred, comes quickly to mind. Yet all potters in England and on the Continent longed to make hard paste. They sought it as if life and fame, or both, were at stake.

The history of Dresden, or more correctly Meis-



Early Dresden showing Oriental influence



Dresden of the late eighteenth century

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sen, is the history of hard paste in Europe. For years potters had labored to produce a ware having the qualities of Chinese porcelain, but it remained for Johann Frederick Böttger, a chemist, to discover the secret in 1709. Böttger was born in Berlin, and practised chemistry until he was suspected of making gold, when the atmosphere of his native city became so hostile that he fled to Dresden. His constant experiments led him to test various clays, and in seeking the philosopher's stone he discovered something better—hard paste porcelain. His first experiments were in a fine red clay, which presented so unyielding a surface that it could be cut by a jeweler's wheel. Böttger ware, as this priceless porcelain is called, is seldom found outside of museums. While historically of great interest, it lacks the beauty of this wonderful man's next discovery.

How Böttger found the precious clay necessary to the composition of white porcelain reads like a story. Possibly it *is* a story. At least, it refutes the theory that Böttger was living on crusts—for a powdered wig and a valet do not harmonize with a garret background. One morning, so runs the tale, the already famous Böttger took up his wig and found it heavy with powder. Questioning his valet as to

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the new preparation used, he became greatly interested in its composition, instantly realizing, so we are told, that here at last was the long desired china clay. Like the dear old story of the discovery of salt-glaze it appears somewhat impossible on the surface. The powder was traced to an iron-master, John Schnorr, who had discovered the clay when riding near Ave in Saxony. His horse's hoofs sank in the clay and immediately he thought "How fine for hair powder." Dismounting he secured a piece of the clay, dried it, pounded it, sold it at once to Böttger's valet and lo! very soon the Elector of Saxony had a fine piece of hard porcelain. Whether or not the story belongs to the apocrypha of china history, it is at least true that about 1710 Böttger was making hard paste, and Meissen from that time forth was to take its place among the most famous wares of the world.

With his second discovery, Böttger's happy days of experimenting came to an end. An invention of such widespread interest brought publicity, and with it the patronage of the Elector of Saxony, Augustus II, who was also King of Poland. A secret so important must be guarded, and the now famous potter was quartered in the Castle of Albrechtsburg at Meissen. The utmost care was exercised to prevent

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other potters from learning the process. If imbeciles were once at a premium in English potteries, deaf and dumb assistants were now most eagerly sought. Böttger paid the penalty of his success by eight years of virtual imprisonment.

At the time of Charles XII's invasion, the potter and his assistants were removed to the fortress of Königstein, where a special regiment was placed on guard. Böttger had an opportunity to show his loyalty to the Elector by quelling a mutiny among his men and by preventing their escape to the royal pottery at Berlin. Great inducements were offered by rival potters, who were eager to employ any one connected with the Meissen works—and in time, hard paste porcelain was made elsewhere.

The Böttger period in Meissen lasted about twelve years—1710 to 1722. Three principal marks were used; "A. R." the initials of "Augustus Rex," with or without a crown, being the most famous. All pieces made for the Elector were thus stamped and a heavy fine imposed if the mark was used on any but the royal china. The wand of Æsculapius, the caduceus, was the stamp used commercially; now very rare, and almost as valuable as the Augustus Rex. Pieces thus marked are even more scarce, for royal china has always been pre-

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served. Toward the close of Böttger's life, the crossed electoral swords were adopted as a mark, and have been used with variations ever since, forming one of the most famous of ceramic stamps.

In 1723, Höroldt, a famous china painter from Vienna, came to Meissen, and the pottery entered into the second period of its existence. Höroldt was responsible for the lovely landscapes and sea views; and the attractive Chinese arrangements with gold borders, also floral *motifs* which, in one form and another, have been associated with Dresden ever since. During this period the mark became smaller, and the swords were joined at the hilts. Following came the Kändler period, with a slight variation in the swords. An entirely different type of china came into being. Kändler was a sculptor, and he modeled birds, flowers and Cupids, giving his personal attention to immense vases, urns and chandeliers.

The Seven Years' War, 1756-1763, brought temporary ruin to the potteries. Frederick of Prussia seized the output of the factories as part of his spoils of conquest, and a chaotic period followed.

Under Augustus III, in 1778, the glories of Meissen were restored; the "King's period," is the name given to this epoch in the history of Meissen. The



Dresden bowl and plate of the Höroldt period



Dresden of a later day, about 1780. Chinese influence is not apparent at this date

CROSSED SWORDS

mark still showed the crossed swords, but a dot was added between the handles. In 1796, Count Marcolini became the head of the works, and a time of prosperity ensued. The Marcolini period closes the historic divisions, and to connoisseurs forms the line of separation between the old and the new. The Marcolini mark, often forged, shows a star in place of the King's dot.

Jervis gives fifteen imitations of the crossed swords, not counting those used at Worcester and other English potteries. It may be said with regret that many English china painters lent their talents to the questionable pursuit of imitating Meissen, marks and all. These really fine copies have perplexed experts, and have added excitement to many famous sales. Regarded in the light of imitations, they are exceedingly clever; as authentic specimens of the English potteries in question they are valuable; but as Meissen, they are worthless. Had the old potters realized all this, they might have spent less time on forgeries. But they worked, not for posterity, but for the patronage of the moment, which demanded then, as now, the latest fad in china. As they had shortly before been Chinese and Dutch, they were now tremendously German, just as later they were tremendously French. So long as they

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adapted patterns, or even borrowed freely, they were keeping well within the license of china making, which has always been elastic; but when they frankly stole, although they were seldom frank about it, they descended to the common level of other forgers. But they met the popular taste and bothered not about posterity—else they might have realized that the most valuable of their products would be the “characteristic” and “typical” specimens, not those which would raise the cry: “What is it?”

After Count Marcolini's death, the china declined in quality, and a colorless, tasteless period followed. In 1818, Kersting, a painter of renown, became head designer. At this time, Bergrate Oppal was director, and continued in office until 1833. In 1827, the invention of liquid gold added to the financial prosperity, but did not increase the beauty of the ware—as a coarser form of decoration became popular. The year 1850 marked another dividing line, for at this time coal was first used in the kilns. Some china experts declare that after that date, the gold took on a different tone, and that this fact makes pieces prior to 1850 of easy identification.

No china has been imitated, copied and forged more than this famous ware, and none has given





Old Berlin



Old Vienna

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rise to greater confusion. Dresden patterns have been borrowed right and left, and the fact that a piece of china is decorated in the Dresden manner is no sign that it was made in Germany.

The beauty and scope of this exquisite china are too little appreciated in America, where old English wares stand to us for all that is attractive. Also Berlin and Vienna porcelains should receive greater recognition.

Of course the explanation of our great interest in English wares is very simple, also our indifference to Continental china. We know the former, if not through actual possession, by many examples in shops and museums. It is natural to study what we are familiar with rather than with what we are unfamiliar. We would rather read about blue Staffordshire, than take the trouble to read even the most entertaining books about European porcelain. Still less, does the study of Chinese porcelain appeal to the average American, who feels, and perhaps justly so, that the subject is too deep for light reading. Another reason for the English trend of interest is that Continental specimens are difficult to secure and rare Chinese examples almost impossible to purchase. However, a broader viewpoint would do no harm and would certainly add zest

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to museum visits, besides being of true value if one of the countries represented were visited.





CHAPTER VIII

FROM FAR CATHAY

A KEEN interest surrounds all old china made to commemorate events, or in honor of distinguished people. A more personal charm pertains to those pieces decorated with monograms or coats of arms which were made to order when the connection between the purchaser and the potter was more intimate than it is to-day. Well-to-do American citizens often sent orders to China in the days of our early shipping interests. Many of these pieces exist to-day, particularly in such localities as Salem, Newburyport, and other New England towns once centers of shipping interests.

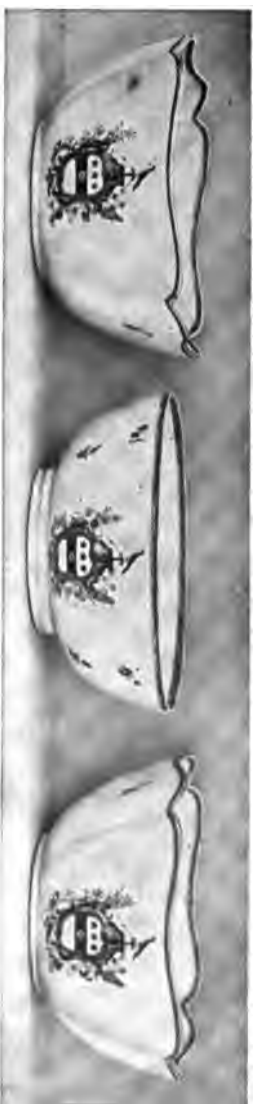
Decorations may be classed under three general heads: coats-of-arms, monograms, and initials. The latter are found in greater numbers. Heraldry could not have been a very absorbing subject in the old days, although the fine book-plates of our Colonial period show that many Americans used armorial bearings.

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To own china marked with your own coat-of-arms, crest or monogram is to possess something unique. To own china marked with your great grandfather's coat-of-arms, crest or monogram is to possess something unique and *rare*. If the great grandfather happened to be a distinguished person you have something unique, rare and *valuable*; if a national character—something suitable for a glass case in a museum.

Being a democratic people, we dearly love heraldry and all the insignia of aristocracy. No daughter of a hundred earls could be prouder of her family lineage than are some of the descendants of the early sea captains of this country, who point with pride to a cracked punch bowl or teapot bearing the family crest.

A certain Cape Cod town should be immortalized, by reason of its many china stories. When in need of an illustration this village has cheerfully furnished me with one. Only once has it failed, and that was when Worcester of the "pink scale" variety was under discussion. The old pantries become as bare as Mother Hubbard's cupboard. An inquiry in regard to the possible location of "pink scale" failed to penetrate the native mind. The questioner was immediately referred to a herring in-



Armorial china, bearing the Chase coat-of-arms



Few "Lowestoft" collections equal the dinner and tea service of two hundred and forty pieces made for the Chase family of Maryland, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art

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dustry in a neighboring town. But on other occasions the old seaport has risen beautifully to the situation. Liverpool ware, Staffordshire, all the Lusters, even ruby Bohemian glass have been located at the right moment. As for Lowestoft—it almost furnishes material for an epic.

Of armorial china there are portions of four sets and four different tales accompany them. One is of such direct Chinese ancestry that it leaves no room for doubt. Soon after Haskett Derby, of Salem, returned from his first very successful voyage to China, smaller enterprises were fitted out from other New England ports. This old town was never a port in a large sense. Her brigs sailed to Liverpool, as several old pitchers testify, and she was for many years headquarters of a large fishing fleet, but no real "heathen" voyages are credited to her.

The old Chinese pieces came by way of Boston and were none the less valued for that. The original papers are in existence, giving the name of the boat and the dates of the voyage, but, unfortunately, no record of the price. The old set, though carefully hoarded, is reduced in numbers. From the remains, it may be gathered that the designs were all very Chinese, much like blue Canton, in outline and proportion. The teapot is gone, but it

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may be safely argued that it was of cylinder shape with straight spout, twisted handle and knob cover. There is no record of a coffee pot, but the bowl-like cups are large enough for coffee. A tea caddy and a beautiful punch bowl are the real treasures.

A well-drawn shield surmounted by a crest decorates each piece. The second set is the most valuable of the four. The decoration is identical with that seen on a good deal of "Lowestoft" ware, but the foundation is unlike it in tone, paste, and glaze. The forms are pure "Lowestoft," except that in the place of the helmet pitcher there is a more conventional creamer. The china is owned by a grandniece of the original owner, a sea captain who purchased it in Liverpool as a bridal gift to his daughter. The daughter died while her father was on the return voyage, and in sight of Provincetown the ship was wrecked. The cargo was saved, including the wedding china, and now, except for the teapot and two plates, is spending an honorable old age in a pantry—no, not a fine old cupboard. But it is the most highly valued thing in town, next to the meeting-house and the town-hall. Only a burglar will secure it, for it will never be given away; and as there are five heirs to every teacup, the chance of its being seen elsewhere is remote. But

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it furnishes a silent protest that all such decorations came from China, and it affords a pleasing theme for discussion among the few collectors who have been fortunate enough to see it. Each cup and saucer contains a black band dotted with stars, and every piece is decorated with two initials enclosed in a small shield and surmounted by a bird. Its entire history, from pottery to pantry, would be of interest, but the beginning of the story is, so to speak, a sealed book.

In spite of Barber, and others who have punctured the "Lowestoft" bubble in a most vigorous manner, these charming pieces are as English as the British lion. It is not claimed that they were made in the town of Lowestoft. But where? The third set is very Oriental looking, has blue borders with gold festoons and the tradition of being bought in New Bedford from a sea captain. The fourth and most attractive set contains the lovely brownish red seen to great advantage in the "Washington" pattern and was brought to town direct from London in a brig which has been honored with a commemorative pitcher of Liverpool make. No doubt has ever been cast on its Chinese origin, but it is called the "London teaset."

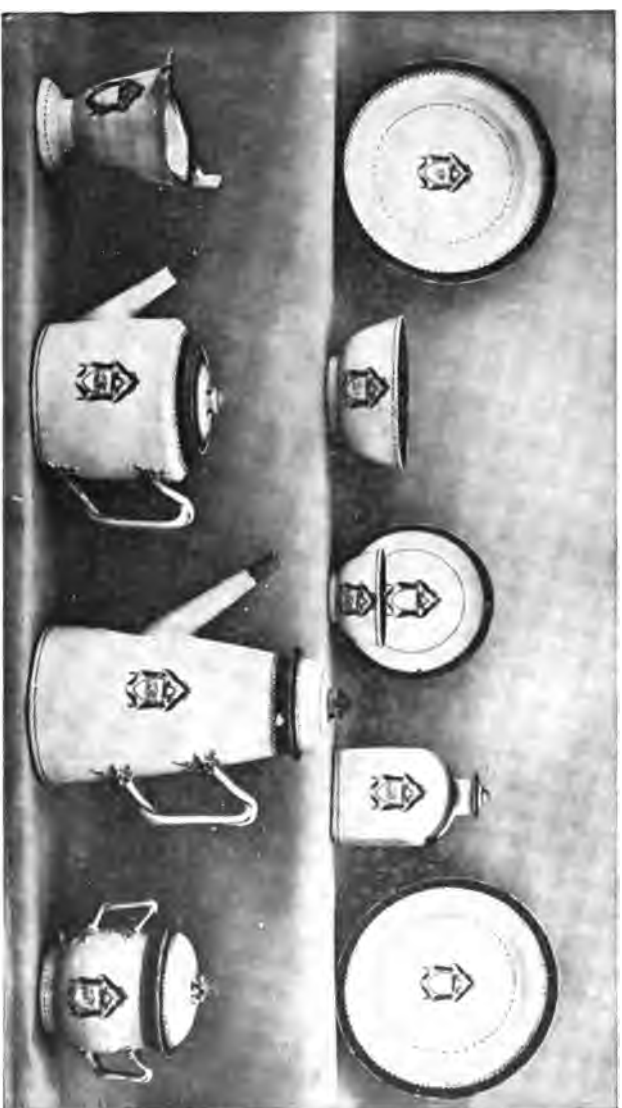
Many tea and dinner services made to order were

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elaborately decorated; those with coats-of-arms ranking first in importance. We do not find in American armorial china the beauty of design and color seen in English ware of this class. The work is more rudely drawn, and looks as if executed from written directions rather than from intimate knowledge of the subject, or with any clear ideas of the laws of heraldry. The lions *passant*, *couchant*, or *rampant*, are amiable beasts resembling Newfoundland dogs; artless in every meaning of the word.

Chinese? Probably most of the china found in America thus decorated is of Oriental origin. A great deal of fine armorial ware in England cannot thus be classed, for it bears every indication of being made at an English factory. It is wonderfully attractive, beautiful in color, and executed with spirit and accuracy. Sometimes an entire plate will be covered with a brilliant rendering of a family coat-of-arms, a Latin motto forming a decorative feature; the motto being correctly given, which cannot be said of most mottoes found over here, which show, as someone has said, "a Chinese knowledge of Latin."

Occasionally in an imposing city antique shop, not in the little, old, dusty curiosity shops, may be seen plates by the dozen or half dozen with most



Tea and coffee service in the Marguand Collection, Metropolitan Museum, dark blue and gold
Typical "Lowestoft".

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elaborate coats-of-arms. These plates may be old, often are, but sometimes they are modern French. The arms are English, the mottoes Latin, and the mark on the back is imitation Chinese. When offered by an Irish or German dealer to an American patron, the purchase savors of a *fête* of all nations. These plates are delightfully decorative, scarce enough to be uncommon, sufficiently expensive to impress those who are dazzled by a big price, but they are not old armorial pieces, and are apt, in the end, to cause loss of sleep and faith.

To those interested in collecting armorial china, and who do not have opportunities to buy in England I would recommend the seaport towns of New England, particularly the small shops where some of the best things to be found in this country frequently lurk. The pieces will not be the gorgeously decorated specimens of the big city shops, but you may count on their being genuine, and usually on the truth of the story which accompanies them.

How far personal interest and enthusiasm may go is well told by Winfield Scott Moody in a delightful Lowestoft story published with kindred tales in a delectable volume, "The Pickwick Ladle." The initials in this case were "E. M. I. B."; and

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Boston, New York, and London provide the backgrounds. Whether the initials stood for Edith McIntosh Burton, the great aunt of Mrs. Peter Wycoff, who owned the set for three happy days, or for Sir Evelyn Mount-Judah Burleigh, the grandfather of one Mr. Burleigh-Jacks of pronounced Cockney accent, I will leave the reader of the tale to find out. A little light on modern prices of old "Lowestoft," is given by the author, also a little insight into the guileless ways of certain dealers. After reading the tale, "personally decorated" china takes on fresh interest and an additional pleasure is given to the quest.

While the English versus Oriental discussion is almost of the past, the subject has assumed a different aspect of late. The recent discoveries of old china molds and fragments of decorated and undecorated porcelain, brought to light by excavators in the town of Lowestoft, place, beyond dispute, the fact that china was made at Lowestoft. Hitherto extreme partisans of the Oriental side of the question have scoffed at the idea that real china was made at all in Lowestoft. This is as absurd in its way as the tenacious belief of some collectors, that all china bearing the appellation "Lowestoft" is of English origin.

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An English china expert while visiting in this country gave me several new lights on the subject. He advances interesting views about Lowestoft. The grandson of a famous English potter, and familiar with both the practical and the technical side of china making, he has an advantage over most writers on the subject. This man knows the town of Lowestoft well, was present when the molds were first examined, has analyzed the clay in the locality, and has had access to the finest public and private collections of Great Britain. He divides all Lowestoft, not into three parts, as was Gaul, but into four. First, Lowestoft made and decorated in Lowestoft; second, so-called Lowestoft—made and decorated in China (purely Oriental in every way); third, Lowestoft made in the town and decorated elsewhere; fourth, Lowestoft made elsewhere and decorated in Lowestoft. When asked in what division American Lowestoft should be placed, he replied: "The second almost without exception. That is to say the 'Lowestoft' imported into your country in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. That, to my mind, is unmistakably Chinese. There are pieces of real Lowestoft in some of your collections, but they have been purchased recently at enormous prices. They

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are soft paste—soft paste, with a very hard glaze. It is this glaze that has deceived many collectors on both sides of the water, and led to the delusion that hard paste was made at Lowestoft. Even Plymouth and Bristol—called the hard paste porcelains of England, are not 'hard' in the Oriental significance of the term. Lowestoft, to my thinking, has never been adequately treated. It needs a book—not a chapter—and a thick book at that. Well, yes, some day I hope to say a few things myself. I shall upset pet theories and stir up a little more controversy, but my illustrations will speak louder than my words. They will show how English the Chinese potter could be, and how very Oriental the English potter could be. Side by side will be hard paste Chinese pieces and soft paste Lowestoft pieces.

The term "Lowestoft" is deeply rooted in the American mind, and it is feared that the average china hunter does not lie awake nights figuring whether his helmet pitcher be English or Oriental. This attitude is startling to most English collectors who take their china hunting more seriously than we.

That real Lowestoft exists in this country is now placed beyond dispute, but it is soft paste, and has none of the qualities of the Chinese ware. By rights



A beautiful specimen of so-called Lowestoft in dark blue and gold decoration

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the so-called Lowestoft should be named something else, neither having been made in Lowestoft, decorated in Lowestoft nor shipped from Lowestoft, but the traditions of ninety years are difficult to uproot. "Oriental Lowestoft" is a good compromise name, and is so elastic that it may fit any Lowestofty looking piece of china bearing a Chinese pedigree. For doubtful specimens it is perhaps as good a name as could be found. Very precise people, however, prefer to label their specimens—"Chinese, in the so-called Lowestoft manner." And truly this guarded unimaginative statement can admit of no criticism.

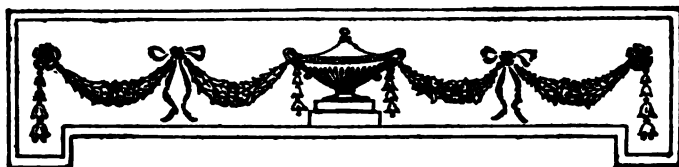
"East India" once meant a good deal, but is confusing to-day. Properly speaking, "East India" includes all the china imported by the East India Company, thus, Nankin, Canton, and other wares come under that heading.

Had the Oriental potter been less clever, the Lowestoft wrangle would never have existed, and thus one of the most fascinating enigmas would have been lost to the collecting world. When we consider the zest it has added to Lowestoft collecting, the "copy" it has meant to writers on old china, the ducats it has been to dealers—the latter is less appealing—who for a moment would have had it

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otherwise? Yet no matter how convincingly the Oriental theory is presented there are several points which are somewhat misty. Why did the Chinese cease to make this attractive ware? They have gone on repeating blue Canton and gold medallion patterns without a break. Yet in the land of its birth there is no more "Lowestoft." The whole controversy reminds one of a well-known artist's definition of *chiaroscuro*;—"clear—obscure, which is more obscure than clear."





CHAPTER IX

THE PRINCE OF POTTERS

IN the decorative arts certain names stand out boldly, holding a place apart from their fellows. Chippendale is one, Cellini another, Wedgwood a third. What Chippendale was to furniture making and Cellini to silver designing, Josiah Wedgwood was to the pottery world. He stood head and shoulders above his contemporaries. An invalid all his life, yet by an indomitable will he was able to achieve extraordinary results. Pottery, not china, was his medium. He never made porcelain, but he brought pottery-making to such a state of perfection that it took on new meaning. "A new art," his admirers said, but it was only an old art in a new guise. Not satisfied with one success he went on developing and perfecting until the list of his achievements was a long one.

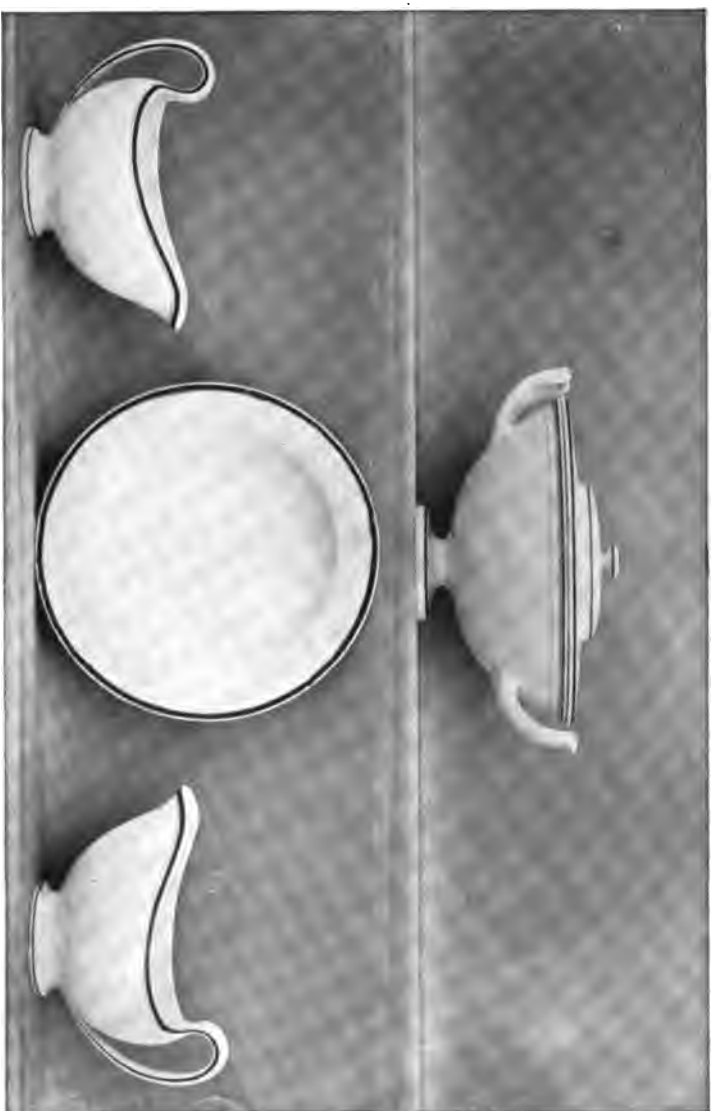
Many kinds of ware bore the Wedgwood im-

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print; two are specially well known in this country—cream ware and blue jasper. In fact, American collectors are apt to forget his other contributions in the pottery line, and to overlook the early combed and agate wares, the black basaltes and the red ware. Combed and agate pieces are associated with Thomas Whieldon, at one time a partner of Wedgwood, yet it was Wedgwood who gave distinction and beauty to Whieldon's early experiments, thereby creating a large demand. Wedgwood valued the work of other men, and in one of his diaries acknowledged his obligation to Whieldon, to Thomas Bentley, another partner, to Thomas Byerley, his nephew, and to John Flaxman, his chief modeler.

Thomas Bentley was not a potter, but he had taste and education, and was, moreover, a good business man. Wedgwood had no liking for business detail, but was wise enough to surround himself with those who had, thus proving himself a most unusual artist.

Our potter came from a family famous for its success with clay dabbling. His uncle, Thomas, achieved considerable fame; his father was a practical working potter, also Thomas by name; his elder brother was a potter, likewise "Thomas";



Queensware dinner service made by Wedgwood in 1768, one of his most successful classic patterns

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his nephew *Thomas* Byerley was also interested in kilns and molds.

The name Thomas seems to have had a pottery significance in England, and the Thomases in furniture history are numerous and important; Chipendale, Sheraton and Shearer heading the list. It comes as a surprise that Hepplewhite was named George, so associated is "Thomas" with English furniture of the eighteenth century. And if one were to count the potters, thus named, beginning with "T. Frye," of Bow, the list would be a long one.

Wedgwood's early biography, briefly stated, runs in this manner: Born at Burslem in 1730; at the age of nine apprenticed to brother Thomas; at the age of twenty-two taken into partnership by Harrison and Alders of the Cliff Bank Pottery, at Stoke on Trent. This connection proved distasteful to young Josiah and two years later we find him at Little Fenton, casting his fortunes and talents with the already well established Whieldon. The partnership at Little Fenton lasted four years and was an important period to both men. Whieldon had been engaged in the making of earthen ware for a number of years and had had considerable success with combed and agate clays. He had likewise

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spent a good deal of time in experimenting with cream ware, in the hope of making a thin paste which would compete with china. One of Wedgwood's first successes was the invention of a green glaze which the older potter used with great effect on his cauliflower ware, a charming variation of the usual "cream" pottery. Collectors are always glad to secure cauliflower pieces and the real ware is scarce enough to make it of real interest. Cream-colored Leeds, if finished with a crinkly green border, is often called "cauliflower," but is quite a different thing.

It was in 1759 that the Whieldon connection was dissolved and the younger man sought a broader field. Back to Burslem he turned his steps, buying an interest in the Ivy Works. Here he worked independently, carrying on various experiments, which were destined to meet with great success later.

But while Wedgwood was dreaming of his future jasper and Egyptian triumphs he gave special attention to improving the coarse cream dishes on the market, and in 1762 he was rewarded by producing "Queensware," the first of his real achievements. The fact that the new ware immediately won royal patronage gave it tremendous vogue. A special pattern was devised for the Queen who had

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already been complimented in the naming of the pottery. Charming in color, texture, and design, the new venture made even Whieldon's best productions seem coarse and unrefined. Queensware won royal favor and, best of all, the steady patronage of the unroyal whose approval is in the long run so much more important.

About this time, Wedgwood realized the importance of a division of labor, some one to do the creative work, and some one to look after the commercial side of the enterprise. Bentley was the man chosen for the business end, but it was not until 1768 that the agreement was consummated. Prior to this, Wedgwood had taken a cousin into partnership, *Thomas* by name, and had moved to larger premises. Bell House or Brick House, Burslem, was chosen as the place of output. The steady sale of Queensware had brought a sufficient return to make possible the finer productions, and from now on Wedgwood gave most of his attention to their practical development. The Bell House Works soon became too small for the successful working out of his schemes, and in 1769 the famous factory located at Etruria was opened. This name is associated with Wedgwood's most celebrated work. Bentley remained at Etruria until

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his death, in 1780, and seems to have been an ideal partner. Ten years later Wedgwood's sons were taken into the business. They were John, Josiah, Jr., and *Thomas*. This family partnership lasted until Wedgwood's untimely death in 1795. The sons carried on the business without a break, and the works at Etruria have been in the hands of the Wedgwoods ever since.

The list of all that this wonderful man achieved seems too long for human accomplishment. He turned from one beautiful production to another, permitting nothing to pass from his hands until it was as perfect as he could make it. Many of his wares have a classic significance, and in all his work he shows a wider knowledge and a broader culture than any of his fellow potters.

In choosing classic subjects for his jasper and Egyptian products, Wedgwood was following the trend of the classic revival in England, yet the spirit and beauty with which these subjects were executed placed them in a class by themselves. In their way they rivaled the classic decorations by Pergolesi, Angelica Kauffmann, and Cipriani found on furniture of Adam design, only with the difference that the work of Wedgwood had the character of a cameo in its exquisite finish.



Black basaltes of classic design made at Etruria soon after the partnership between Wedgwood and Bentley was formed

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The variety of things made in jasper and black Egyptian wares is extensive—tea services, coffee services, and “ornamental” articles such as flower-urns, medallions, vases, plaques, busts, intaglios, etc. Some of the subjects are “Jupiter Destroying the Titans,” “The Feast of the Gods,” “The Marriage of Cupid and Psyche,” “The Triumph of Bacchus,” and the famous “Dance of the Hours,” or “Dancing Hours” designed and modeled by Flaxman.

“Perhaps the best known of his Queensware services was executed for the Empress of Russia—Catharine II. It took more than eight years to manufacture, having been commenced in 1766 and finished in 1775. It had 1,200 views, many of them sketched for the purpose, of English life and scenery. The views are principally of the palaces and seats of the English nobility.”

Egyptian ware or basaltes was a fine unglazed black pottery of remarkable texture and quality. Jasper ware usually had a body of a plain tone with relief decorations in white. This body was often of the color known now as “Wedgwood blue,” but occasionally lilac, pink, sage green, and yellow were employed. Very charming were the combinations, offering an endless opportunity for the display of the master potter’s fancies.

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Blue jasper varied from a rather deep, strong tone to a lovely gray tint, now difficult to procure. Jasper-dip was a later invention, undertaken to reduce expense, but in reality proving a more costly process. The chocolate service and the cameo plaque, illustrated, represent the later process. Designed by Lady Templeton, and modeled by Flaxman, they are specimens of the 1785 to 1790 period, when the "cutting away" method of work reached a high state of beauty.

"Jasper-dip consisted of white jasper with a surface coloring produced by a wash of a mixture in which metallic oxides formed the chief ingredient." As in solid jasper ware the "cutting away" process had much to do with the beauty of the final result.

From the first Wedgwood was wise enough to surround himself with talented people. His choice of partners was a demonstration of his keen insight in these matters. As he selected business associates, he chose his assistants. Flaxman, Hackwood, Greatback were modelers of rarest skill; designers, too, although it usually fell to their lot to model the designs of others. The classic subjects used at Etruria may be divided into two groups: first, actual copies of antiques, as the Portland and



Chocolate service designed by Lady Templeton about 1785. Rathbone Collection

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Homeric vases; second, original themes in classic spirit, as "The Offering to Flora," "The Offering to Peace," "The Young Academy" and many other exquisite things. Lady Templeton's designing takes high rank and scarcely less interesting are the creations of that other titled woman, Lady Diana Beauclerc. The sketches left by the Lady Diana are among the most fascinating things of this period.

It is hard to improve over Wedgwood's own cataloguing of his wares:

"1. A terra-cotta; resembling porphyry, granite, Egyptian pebble, and other beautiful stones of the silicious or crystalline order.

2. Basaltes or black ware; a black pottery biscuit of nearly the same properties with the natural stone; striking fire with steel, receiving a high polish, serving as a touchstone for metals, resisting all the acids, and bearing without injury a strong fire; stronger indeed than the basaltes itself.

3. White pottery biscuit, of a smooth, wax-like surface, of the same properties with the preceding, except in what depends upon color; of firm and even texture.

4. Jasper; a white pottery biscuit of exquisite beauty and delicacy, possessing the general properties of the basaltes, together with the singular

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one of receiving through its whole substance, from the admixture of metallic calces with the other materials, the same colors which those calces communicate to glass or enamels in fusion—a property which no other porcelain or earthenware body of ancient or modern composition has been found to possess. This renders it peculiarly fit for making cameos, portraits, and all subjects in bas-relief, as the ground may be of any particular color, while the raised figures are of a pure white.

5. Bamboo or cane-colored biscuit pottery, of the same nature as No. 3.

6. A pottery biscuit remarkable for great hardness, little inferior to that of agate. This property, together with its resistance to the strongest acids and corrosives, and its impenetrability by every known liquid, adapts it for mortars and many different kinds of chemical vessels.

These six distinct species with the Queensware already mentioned, expanded by the industry and ingenuity of the different manufacturers into an infinity of forms for ornament and use, variously painted and embellished, constitute nearly the whole of the present fine English earthenwares and pottery which are now become the source of a very extensive trade, and which, considered as an

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object of national art, industry, and commerce, may be ranked amongst the most important manufactures of the kingdom.

Beautiful forms and compositions are not to be made by chance; and they never were made nor can be made in any kind at a small expense; but the proprietors of this manufactory have the satisfaction of knowing, by a careful comparison, that the prices of many of their ornaments are *much lower*, and of all of them as *low* as those of any other ornamental works in Europe, of equal quality and *bisque*, notwithstanding the high price of labor in England, and they are determined rather to give up the making of any article than to degrade it. They do not manufacture for those who estimate works of ornament by their *magnitude*, and who would buy pictures at so much a foot. They have been happy in the encouragement and support of many illustrious persons who judge of the works of art by better principles; and so long as they have the honor of being thus patronized they will endeavor to support and improve the quality and taste of their manufactures."

These admirable paragraphs were printed in English, French and Dutch, and bear the date 1775.

Some of Wedgwood's critics have regretted that

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he copied classic subjects instead of working on original lines. What the world would have lost if he had been less interested in the antique is difficult to imagine.

Few things in the whole realm of *objets d'art* are as famous as the Portland Vase. It is the Venus de Milo and the Sistine Madonna of glassware. Had Josiah Wedgwood done nothing more than make his celebrated copies, he would have had more glory than falls to the lot of most men. The material vase may be shattered to bits, even as it has been in the past, and without the possibility of repair; the British Museum may pass from the face of London, but the fame of this eight and a half inch object will endure. Less than nine inches—think of it—and a Wedgwood copy sold not long ago for three thousand dollars.

Fate plays many jests with the ownership of things. Seldom is the vase called Barberini, less frequently Hamilton, almost never Alexander Severus. Yet Sir William Hamilton owned it, Cardinal Barberini discovered it, and the ashes of the Emperor Severus once filled it. The Duke of Portland's connection is important. He was responsible for its passing into Wedgwood's hands, and in the interesting chain of events which dates back



Detail of "An Offering to Flora"—Jasper-Dip



Detail of the above plaque designed by Lady Templeton in 1785

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to A.D. 235, and is not yet ended, inasmuch as there are a number of perfect copies in existence in addition to the cracked and mended original, the Portland name is surely worthy of perpetuation. Yet Cardinal Barberini's connection deserves greater prominence. "Portland Barberini" for the real vase and "Wedgwood-Portland-Barberini" for the copies would seem fair, but this leaves out the maker of the vase who is by necessity forgotten. The vandal who smashed the original, in 1845, while on a visit to the Museum, won temporary notoriety. He should be nameless, but in the interests of a correct chronicle he must be written down as one William Lloyd. He was arrested, brought to trial and fined, but possessing merely a ninepence was sent to Tothill Fields prison. A week later the fine was paid by an unknown sympathizer and Lloyd was liberated. The name of the man who mended the vase is more cheerfully recorded—John Doubleday of London. For those who like to gaze on the remains of past beauty, a water-color drawing of the broken fragments may be seen in the room where the restored vase is exhibited.

Better than the mended vase or the curious sketch of broken bits is a blue jasper copy in perfect condition. It has a certain spirit which the cleverly

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mended original seems to lack. Moreover, the Wedgwood seems so entirely human, quite of our own times, and infinitely more cheerful than a mortuary urn of an emperor, dating back to the third century.

What Sir William Hamilton paid for the vase while in Rome, in 1782, has never had wide publicity, what the Duchess of Portland paid Hamilton when she purchased it from him is a matter of conjecture. But the amount the young Duke gave when the marvelous collection of the Duchess came under the hammer was a little over five thousand dollars, and it was Wedgwood's bidding that forced him to give so large a sum. The potter was persuaded to withdraw from the contest by the Duke's gracious promise that he should be allowed to make fifty copies. It was the Duke's wish to bid in the vase and prevent its passing out of the Portland family. But for Wedgwood's persistency he would have secured it at a lower figure, for the other bidders dropped out as the two hundred pound mark was reached. Wedgwood, then at the height of his work in classic reproductions, recognized the tremendous opportunity which the vase offered. An object so well known and so exquisitely beautiful could not fail to interest his most critical patrons, when du-



Two views of the Portland Vase

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plicated in his recently perfected jasper ware. Then the artist in the man was thrilled at the thought of perpetuating so famous and fragile an object. The Duke, not recognizing the potter, became alarmed at the steady determination to secure the vase. When he discovered that his persistent opponent was the well-known Josiah Wedgwood and learned his intention he granted full permission, and thus made posterity his debtor.

For an entire year Wedgwood had the vase in his possession, a favor which he never forgot. Several letters are in existence, expressing the greatest appreciation on the potter's part. The copies progressed slowly, as many experiments were necessary in order to secure the color. Neither blue jasper nor black jasper proved the correct shade. At once Wedgwood perceived the difficulty of reproducing glass in pottery; a copy was possible, but not a duplicate. The tone of the original was a deep and exquisite dark blue, nearly black in some lights and showing an amethyst tone in others. Two strata formed the body, the ground the rich color described and the bas-relief in snowy white glass of a cameo delicacy and clearness. Wedgwood reproduced the cameo effect with greatest skill, for he was already master of that form of decoration, and in the end he

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secured a color as near the shade of the background as was possible in a different medium. The price asked for each copy was fifty guineas—a little more than two hundred and fifty dollars.

The moulds have been kept to this day and it is possible to buy a modern "Wedgwood-Portland-Barberini" for a comparatively reasonable price. One may study, as in the original, the beautiful delineation of Peleus and Thetis on Mt. Peleon.

To those who are sufficiently interested in the Portland-Barberini vase as to wish to own a copy of some kind, the plaster reproductions in ivory tones are recommended. They are not real copies of course, but rather free translations, beautiful as to outline and modeling, interesting as to color, and full of decorative quality. Moreover, they suggest in a charming way the history of the famous original, with a long train of distinguished notables, including the Emperor Alexander, the Pope Urban VIII, formerly Cardinal Barberini, Sir William Hamilton, the elderly Duchess and the young Duke, Josiah Wedgwood and the fourth Duke of Portland, who presented the vase to the British Museum, and finally the present Wedgwoods who carry on so faithfully the traditions handed down to them.

It is not often that one finds for sale in the

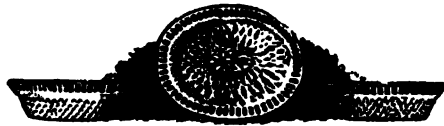
THE PRINCE OF POTTERS

market place, real Wedgwood things, yet such occasions do happen and one collector cherishes to this day a little Wedgwood creamer purchased forty years ago at the sale of a Methodist minister's personal effects in a small western town. "He did not care to move his table-ware." To-day part of this same table-ware, namely the Wedgwood tea service, would almost equal a year's salary, but this he did not know, nor did any of the people at the auction. The little creamer was purchased for a sum too small to be dignified by print. The owner has always been torn between humiliation at the thought of the price paid, and remorse that she did not secure the entire service which included tea-plates, two cake-plates, a teapot, sugar-bowl, creamer and waste-bowl. This Wedgwood was not blue. It was a light yellow or corn color, "bamboo" as the potter himself would have called it, and the decoration in low relief and of exquisite modeling was in the shape of white ferns. It was not made by Josiah Wedgwood, but by his immediate successor and had been a wedding present for some unknown bride. The clergyman had purchased it "second hand" and it had no associations, but how could anyone part with anything so lovely for a few paltry dollars? There had been a water pitcher,

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too, in the beginning, a tall graceful design which was not unlike, in outline, those vases of Parian which once graced the mantels of New England parlors. To-day we look in vain for Wedgwood in green or yellow, and are lucky indeed to find it in blue.

Wedgwood's influence on the potters of the late eighteenth century equaled that of Robert Adam on the furniture-makers. Not only for their own achievements but also for what they inspired others to do, must these gifted men be rated.





CHAPTER X

SPECIALIZING

OLD china more than any other "collector's interest" seems to have a personal charm. Even old silver and other rare metals, all beautiful and sometimes ten times more valuable, do not have quite the same quality. Yet it is possible that certain silver things might be very friendly. A George II shoe-buckle should be able to convey in silver language many interesting and important happenings, sentimental and otherwise. And if one had ears to hear, doubtless any collection of old articles from shoe-buckles to sword-hilts could tell tales of romance which would make writers of best sellers quite green with envy.

People who specialize on teapots claim that these articles more than any others are especially human. Bowl collectors assert the same for bowls,

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and jug enthusiasts swear by jugs. And probably that German collector whose cabinets are filled with watch-cocks and no other thing feels that a watch-cock is the epitome of interest, so far as curios are concerned.

Technically a teapot is not a curio. It is just a dear, old, everyday object of use, which some potter made as beautiful as his art and craft would permit. It may be of heavy earthen ware or of thinnest porcelain; it may be low and friendly or high and somewhat aloof, but it carries with it an indescribable charm, which to the owner is extremely potent and may be felt in a remote way by those to whom it is merely a teapot.

Some intrepid souls make friezes of their teapots. How much more interesting would be a frieze of steins! A teapot is a cozy thing, demanding certain accessories to be at its best. As a purely ornamental article it lacks the charm of the mug; the irregularity of handle and spout interfere with its value as a decorative unit. Not so the mug. The latter is a cylinder to which a handle has been added. Twenty mugs of comparative size would show little difference in the handles. Twenty teapots would have twenty different spouts and twenty different handles—unless they were new and ordered



Salem corner-cupboard containing Staffordshire, Wedgwood, Canton, Derby and Dresden

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by the dozen. Teapots in a cupboard are most attractive, but placed in a row, they lose beauty as well as point.

One reason why the plate-rail is a recognized feature of dining-room furnishing is that it is so ornamental. The similarity of plates makes them an excellent multiple—and the eye does not tire as it would of a hit-or-miss assortment of things strung along the wall. Books, in another way, have the same quality. We never tire of rows and rows of books—and this entirely aside from their value as friends and companions.

English decorators recognize the force of the repeated unit. Many of their most attractive friezes are based upon the principle of repetition. The *motif* is seen at a glance. The whole charm lies in the fact that the pine tree, or the urn of flowers, or whatever the theme may be, is printed over and over. And this brings us back to mugs and mugs and mugs, and steins and steins and steins.

When considered from the collector's standpoint, which is seldom a decorative one, steins and mugs offer a most interesting field. The hobby may be as extensive and expensive as time and money permit. It may be limited to a collection of mugs picked up in New England farmhouses, or it may embrace

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rare drinking vessels gathered from all parts of the world. Modern mugs, unless of unusual interest, will scarcely find place in the collection. Many German steins of recent origin are extremely interesting and almost as decorative as the old ones. Heraldic devices in brilliant colors, and mottoes in old script adorn both old and new specimens, and it is sometimes difficult for a novice to distinguish between them. With mugs, there is less opportunity to err, for few of the old ones have been reproduced. The broad distinction between the mug and the stein is that the latter has a metal top; the stein is properly a "drinking vessel," while the mug is of a more elastic classification. If one wished to confine the quest to this country, it would be well to call the article a mug and to look for those of American and English origin.

In New England it is still possible to find beautiful old mugs. Like bowls, they have not yet caught the fancy of collectors. The popularity of plates has resulted in a dearth of these articles, except in the antique shops. Teapots in good condition have always been scarce. Pitchers are growing in favor, and consequently are becoming more and more uncommon, but mugs are still available—if one will take the trouble to hunt them.

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The mugs found in rural New England are not of the rarest kind, but they are old, and, it goes without saying, interesting to those who are on mugs intent. Lowestoft mugs, with coats of arms and family crests, will not be encountered, nor will fine specimens of Bristol be matters of everyday finding. Copper luster, the more ordinary kinds of Bristol crockery, Liverpool ware and Leeds will be the most frequent examples; although finer and more unusual specimens may furnish an occasional surprise. Historical Staffordshire must be crossed off the list as outside the range of possibilities, although historical Liverpool is a probability. Liverpool mugs, like pitchers, are often commemorative of naval battles and naval heroes and decidedly decorative.

From the decorative viewpoint—which is hard to get away from where mugs are concerned—no specimens are more desirable than those of copper luster. The variety in this ware alone affords a good basis for a collection. Luster cider mugs are fine in shape, attractive in decoration, and beautiful in color. They range from dark brown through the brighter grades to a rich golden color, almost as brilliant as Spanish luster. The decorations vary from fine flowers powdered over the surface to raised flow-

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ers and figures in brilliant tones. A peculiarity of luster mugs is that they flare at the top and the base; they are seldom of the cylindrical forms of most English mugs.

The invention of transfer printing revolutionized the process of decorating china. It appeared almost simultaneously at several potteries, a fact which has obscured the claims of the real inventor. Robert Hancock, the engraver, was responsible for much of Worcester's success with transferred designs. Pieces thus decorated are usually in the form of mugs and jugs commemorative of persons and events. Frederick the Great was a special favorite at this period and his countenance appears on a number of mugs. George II and III and Queen Charlotte are also honored.

Most of the transfer work was in black on a cream-colored ground. The process is identical with that of Liverpool ware, although the body of Worcester gives a more etched-like appearance to the decoration. Hancock's initials appear on some of the mugs and his connection with the pottery in question was at one time quite close. The fine Frederick of Prussia pieces were undoubtedly his.

Under the head of "jugs" many collectors class pitchers, creamers, steins and mugs, making a gamut

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extensive enough to embrace countless specimens. "Pitcher" is an American word. In England your hot water in the morning is brought to you in a *jug*, your cream for your early cup of tea, your milk at luncheon, and so through the day until the final jug brings you something hot and sustaining about ten o'clock.

"Jug" certainly has a much more social sound than "pitcher," which suggests ice water and thin milk. "Creamer" is, of course, extremely limited in meaning, although a large collection of charming small things, and extremely valuable ones, could be built up around this word. "Mug" usually means, in this country, at least, a cylinder shaped object with a handle, while "jug" in the purely American sense would never contribute largely to either cabinet or cupboard.

Jugs of early American stoneware, if one could secure enough, would make a most interesting showing for a long, board shelf, and would be worth more than many later and finer things, but they would not be jugs in the English meaning. The jugs of English collections usually comprise great receptacles of Staffordshire, Sunderland, Liverpool, Leeds, all the lustres and various other earthenwares which are known to us in many guises. The deco-

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rative value of such a collection is tremendous, for the surface is large enough in each instance to show a complete design. Some of the best work of English potters, so far as perfection of pattern is concerned, is found on these fine old pieces which we would usually class as large pitchers.

Mottoes and rhymes are found on many drinking things of English make. Liverpool ware is usually adorned with rhymes, and some of the charming rose-colored jugs of Sunderland have convivial verses. A few collectors have gone in for rhyming wares, limiting their purchases to such specimens, but this field would be too limited for the average American, who is often a specialist but seldom a rhyming one.

A collection of mugs and jugs could be made extremely interesting and would be more representative than a collection of teapots, bowls, plates or platters. It would require space and it might be expensive, but there would be no end to the entertaining experiences. The opportunities for indulging the hobby would be endless. Almost every old shop would contribute something, and the only perplexing question would be, when to stop. The earliest stone and earthenware of England should open the collection unless one were lucky enough to se-

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cure an old "gray beard" of German origin. A piece of old slip ware should be included, Toft if possible, but if not procurable, a specimen of later slip made in the Toft manner, namely, one clay over another, the latter being applied by means of a tube. Salt-glazed pieces would form an interesting section of a jug collection and add variety and value. Salt-glazed "pitchers" have always been eagerly collected here when opportunities presented themselves. There are many types which we seldom see in this country and can hardly hope to find, particularly the early, grayish-white and deep, cream colored specimens of the early eighteenth century. We do occasionally find later examples of salt-glazed where color has been added.

Probably the Staffordshire potteries will give most to the seeker of jugs, and a very pretty assortment could be made in printed pieces alone. If one wished historical specimens only, there would be a wide range, though for such a fancy one must be willing to pay the price. There are stunning things in dark blue Staffordshire in the jug line. How well "Lafayette at the Tomb of Franklin," comes out on the large rounded surface of a giant pitcher! How fine the border following the lines of the broad spout! How decorative the handles! The printing

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is usually far better than when the pattern covers the more complicated lines of a teapot; the coloring is invariably fine. Plates and platters of dark blue have been so popular with American buyers that the beauties of other articles in the same ware have been neglected. Yet a big pitcher or jug showing Lafayette or other heroes of the day is quite as fascinating in its way as the high priced flat article, which in the beginning probably did not cost half so much.

Blue Staffordshire jugs may be found in patterns other than historical. These are charming, one in flowers, butterflies and birds, not common, but well worth hunting, and well worth buying when found. A jug with the well known "Sheltered Peasants" depicted on its rotund body is the particular pride of one collector. In this collection are a number of luster jugs and mugs, and they fully justify the claim of one enthusiast that nothing is quite as decorative as fine copper luster. One is of the very golden tone, which Wedgwood is said to have used so successfully. It is without ornament; being itself so ornamental it needs no further adornment. By contrast its next neighbor, luster, seems almost dark brown. This second piece is tall and rather slender, not a common design, and it is powdered over with small blue flowers which are in quite high

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relief. Then there are three luster pieces decorated with pictures. On the deep yellow bond on one eight-inch jug, are two graceful Empire ladies playing "Shuttlecock and Battledore." "The Surrender of Cornwallis" is seen on the second, while three children in quaint costumes rolling hoop add life and color to the third. All three are valuable, the "Cornwallis" especially so, which is by far the most desirable thing in the collection.

A smaller jug is of warm brown luster, decorated with yellow and red flowers, and green leaves—quite gay in effect and of undoubted age. There is a mottled rose luster of Sunderland make and one big silver luster piece, so highly polished that it reflects everything in the collection, and would serve for a mirror if necessary. One could specialize on the lusters and still have nothing but jugs and in these particular objects the luster potteries undoubtedly did their best work. The owner of these pieces hopes some day to add a big silver luster specimen in a yellow resist pattern, and has dreams of going to the old country and finding Bristol, Leeds and particularly some of the early examples of salt-glazed, slip, Fulham and English delft to add to the jug shelf.

In my own collection, which does not run to jugs,

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is a very desirable Bristol specimen. It was in the beginning a water pitcher and was accompanied by a bowl. Dealers will tell you that they can seldom sell a bowl and pitcher together. Someone is sure to come along and want the pitcher. Few people want a bowl. So they have a pleasing way of putting a very high price on the pitcher and almost giving the bowl away—a fact which is known to bowl collectors, but has apparently not yet been discovered by the great pitcher brotherhood. This Bristol pitcher cost five times what the bowl did. It is probably worth that difference according to the mysterious supply and demand of the china trade. Five people would want the pitcher to one person wanting the bowl. That one person might want the bowl five times as much. However, the pitcher is altogether charming. It has queer Bristol flowers of yellow, orange, and old blue grouped with many leaves of a soft olive green—wonderfully pleasing as to color, brilliant, yet mellow. Bristol of this type, not the finest of course, so far as technique is concerned, but extremely desirable, is apt to crack and chip, a fact well known to those who have such pieces. This pitcher is in perfect condition, except for a small nick on the spout which shows a very brown foundation. The finest

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pitcher of my assortment is an Alcock of an exquisite lilac shade, ornamented in high white relief. If it were Wedgwood it could hardly be more graceful in outline or more clear cut in its cameo delicacy. It is far too unusual to be placed with other things and has been given a special corner of its own, where its lovely mauve tones are undisturbed by stronger colors.

A "Farmer's Arms" pitcher is here with its long verse, a good piece of Liverpool ware, somewhat discolored, as these tall, slender things are apt to be. Its outlines have that decided grace well known to lovers of Liverpool. A splendid collection of mugs and jugs could be selected from this old ware. The famous Washington and Masonic pitchers, the "Arms" series of which the "Farmer's" is only one-twelfth of a dozen, the many naval specimens and numerous commemorative examples would more than fill a very generous shelf space—and shelves are especially desirable for all mugs, jugs and pitchers. The smaller specimens should hang from the handles, although if this scheme is carried too far, the assortment looks rather shoppy.

Liverpool pitchers are undoubtedly the most interesting of commemorative ceramics. They were imported in great quantities during the early years

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of the nineteenth century. Many were made to order by wealthy ship owners and display various barques, brigs and frigates. A collection of naval and merchant marine pitchers throws more light upon our early shipping and naval interests than volumes upon the subject. A few china enthusiasts have turned their attention in this direction, others have chosen Liverpool pitchers of another class including "Washington," "Masonic" and the various "Arms" specimens. Of Washington designs the "Portrait" and the "Apotheosis" are most valuable. The first bears a copy of the Stuart portrait of Washington and is remarkably lifelike; the second contains a reproduction of an engraving which had great vogue after Washington's death. Father Time is bearing Washington away from earth; "Sacred to the memory of Washington" is painted on a tomb, while beneath the spout runs the line "A man without example; a Patriot without reproach." The Stuart pitcher is full of beauty; the "Apotheosis" is rare and much sought, but can hardly be regarded as an attractive delineation of the father of his country.

Sadler is the name most closely identified with Liverpool ware. "Sadler ware" is the term sometimes applied to Liverpool pieces. Green, at one



Glazed earthenware



Copper luster

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time a partner of Sadler, must share his honors; and Abbey, once employed by Sadler and later a large manufacturer, must not be forgotten. The various "Arms" pitchers are attributed to Abbey.

If one were beginning a pitcher collection, he would hardly "start" with a Liverpool; for the acquiring of one is seldom a matter of accident. In the first place a good example is expensive; in the second, it must be purchased of an antique dealer, and that is too prosaic a way to begin a collection of anything. A bit of blue Staffordshire, copper or silver luster is usually the beginning of a pitcher collection.

The opportunities for finding proof pitchers are countless; perfect teapots are becoming more scarce each year. The reason is quite plain; pitchers were seldom subjected to hard wear. In time, hot tea discolored. Even with careful treatment the spout of the "company" teapot would often show a faint ivory tone. Milk and cream produced little effect on the softest paste and thus it is, to-day, that the creamer of a tea service will be spick and span as if just from the potter's hand, while the teapot will be dark in spots and probably cracked. The spout will have a few nicks at the opening and the cover be minus the knob. But the little pitcher is in full

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possession of its "points"; handle, spout, lip and base are intact and it is ready for continued service, or for a place in cabinet or cupboard.

All pitchers are not cabinet pieces nor are all pitchers fit for cupboards—a distinction being made between cupboards and cabinets. A piece suitable for the former is not always adapted to the latter. A cabinet piece, aside from its proof condition must be a valuable specimen from some standpoint. It need not necessarily be of the rarest china, but it should be a characteristic specimen and it should represent something beside money. It must please for its line or color—in other words, for its beauty; or, barring that, it must represent some interesting phase of pottery making—an evolution, a transition, or a perfecting of some paste, glaze or decoration. Pitchers coming under these various classifications are seldom large. If creamers, they are of necessity comparatively small.

Creamers might be designated as cabinet specimens and pitchers as cupboard pieces—although, some old pitchers would tax the capacity of the largest cupboard. Liverpool and Sunderland pieces, and the larger luster specimens are too generous of dimension for the usual cupboard. One Liverpool pitcher or one of Sunderland make, forms a good

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center piece for a collection. Where a collector specializes on pitchers, large and small shelves afford a better sitting. A shelf, four or five inches in width, around a dining-room, makes an extremely effective foundation for a pitcher display. Large specimens may be placed on the shelf, grouped to the best advantage, while smaller acquisitions may hang from hooks. Cabinets should contain pieces too choice to be exposed to dust or a chance mishap.

Valuable inscription pitchers, though coming under a different head, are alphabet pieces, with Franklin maxims. These have been so cleverly imitated of late that it is sometimes difficult to tell the old from the new, yet when the respectability of a jug is well established, it brings a price quite out of proportion to its merits.

Collecting old china embellished with rhymes and mottoes has led to several unique assortments of mugs and pitchers. Liverpool potters had a special penchant for rhyming, and Liverpool ware forms the basis for such collections. Tall pitchers decorated with military or naval heroes on one side and with inscriptions on the other are some of the interesting things unearthed in a hunt for pottery doggerel. The rhymes are very bad, but

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they afford those collectors who like to feel that they are doing "something different," an amusing field. Here is a sample of Liverpool verse-making on a drinking mug:

"Customers came and I did trust 'em,
So I lost my money and my custom.
And to lose both, it grieves me sore,
So I am resolved to trust no more."

Another mug is thus inscribed:

"Tho' malt and vernom
Seem united,
Don't break my back
Nor be affrighted."

A third runs:

"To all good people,
From mother earth I took my birth,
Then formed a jug by man
And now I stand here filled with good cheer.
Taste of me if you can."

These convivial specimens show the rhyming capacity of the English potter, which cannot be rated as a high one.

In a more dignified vein are the verses found on Masonic pitchers, which are among the most inter-

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esting of inscribed pieces. Liverpool ware of this character is cream-colored, decorated with transfer printing in black or dark brown, with an occasional design in color. There are many Masonic rhymes of which the following is a characteristic example:

"We help the poor in time of need,
The naked clothe, the Hungry feed.
'Tis our foundation stone.
We build upon the noblest plan,
Where Friendship rivets man to man
And makes us all as one."

Another well-known Masonic sentiment runs:

"The world is in pain
Our secret to gain,
But still let them wonder, gaze on,
For they ne'er can divine
The word nor the sign
Of a Free and Accepted Mason."

In lofty strain is the following, found on a pitcher holding two quarts, decorated with lodge emblems and devices:

"To Judge with candor
And speak no wrong,
The feeble to support against the strong,

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To soothe the wretched and the poor to feed,
Will cover many an idle foolish deed."

Of inscribed pitchers, those most interesting to good Americans bear the dignified, be-wigged countenance of our own Washington. There are many in this series; in fact, the pieces of Liverpool and other ware relating to the "Father of His Country," have led a few collectors to devote all their energies to china of this class; a still smaller band have gone in for Franklin pieces. Nelson was a favorite ceramic hero, but not more so than Washington, who seems to have been especially honored by Liverpool potters.

Several pitchers bear the well-known words:

"First in war, First in Peace,"

one containing the addition:

"First in Fame, First in Victory."

A longer inscription is found on a small pitcher ornamented with flags and a liberty cap:

"As he tills your rich glebe your old peasant shall
tell,

While his bosom with Liberty glows,

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Rare group of Liverpool pitchers

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How your Warren expired, how Montgomery fell,
And how Washington humbled your foes."

At that period the British potter wrote calmly and quite without patriotism of America's foes, although the reference to the "peasant" and the "rich-glebe" is English enough to make up for the rest of the verse.

Punch-bowl inscriptions furnish amusing examples of illiteracy and incongruity, but bowls of all kinds have met a less kindly fate than pitchers, and inscribed specimens are extremely rare. One absurd rhyme, more appropriate for a tombstone than for a punch-bowl reads:

"There is a land of peaceful rest
To mourning wanderers given.
There's a tear for souls distrest,
A balm for every wounded breast.
'Tis found above in Heaven."

This mournful inscription, which suggests an old sampler, is found on bowls and jugs made in North Hylton, England. Other Hylton rhymes, found for the most part on pitchers, relate to sailors and the sea. Here is one:

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"Guide on, my bark, the summer's tide
Is gently flowing by the side;
Around thy brow the waters bright
In circling rounds of broken light
Are glittering as if ocean gave
Her countless gems to deck the wave."

For a pitcher verse this is quite a flight of fancy.
In similar vein are the inscriptions on Sunderland
jugs, one of which is in my own collection.
This bears the "Sailor's Farewell," and runs:

"Sweet, oh sweet is that sensation
Where two hearts in union meet
But the pain of separation
Mingles bitter with the sweet."

Another Sunderland rhyme runs:

"The sailor tossed on stormy seas,
Though far his bark may roam,
Still hears a voice in every breeze
That wakens thoughts of home;
He thinks upon his distant friends,
His wife, his humble cot;
And from his inmost heart ascends
The prayer, For-get-me-not."

Sunderland jugs with their lovely rose luster tones

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are valuable from several standpoints. Many collectors of luster make a special point of Sunderland; a few of "rhymed Sunderland" which is, as yet, a rather unexplored by-path.

Returning to Liverpool ware, which is hard to get away from when interest in rhyming pottery is once aroused, the fine series of "Arms" pitchers should not be neglected. The "Farmer's Arms," best known because so often described, contains this verse:

"Let mighty and great
Roll in splendor and state,
I envy them not, I declare it;
I eat my own lamb,
My chicken and ham,
I shear my own sheep and I wear it.
I have lawns, I have bowers,
I have fruits, I have flowers,
The lark is my morning alarmer;
So you jolly dogs now
Here's to God bless the Plow,
Long life and content to the Farmer."

In many of the books devoted to old china this stanza is incorrectly quoted, the first lines being given as:

"May the mighty and great
Roll in splendor and state."

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It will be seen from these examples that "rhyming ware" was not uncommon and that a collection based on such may be quite extensive in range.

Occasionally the collector, bent on teapots or jugs, comes across a tureen or a fruit-dish, too large for cupboard or cabinet, but so glowing in color, so attractive in design, that it is straightway added to the collection. Of such a class are the graceful fruit-baskets and the dark blue tureen shown in this chapter.

Pierced fruit-dishes are among the quaintest of English designs. Many of the "china baskets," as they were called in the old days, came from Leeds, others from the Wedgwood, Crown Derby, and Staffordshire potteries. That they were also made at the Caughley works is demonstrated by the pretty willow specimen depicted. Here is a piece of willow which makes a mere plate seem commonplace by comparison.

Upon the low oval base, with its delicate open-work border, is the usual willow picture, the story of which has been told many times. An old rhyme, written in Staffordshire more than a hundred years ago, describes the main points of the pattern:

"Two pigeons flying high,
Chinese vessel sailing by,

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Weeping-willow hanging o'er,
Bridge with three men, if not four,
Chinese temple, there it stands,
Seems to cover all the land,
Apple tree with apples on,
A pretty fence to end my song."

The basket reproduced with the tureen is white, with the exception of the border and handles, which are of the well-known Caughley blue, darker than later willow ware, yet scarcely reaching the richness of Staffordshire blue, which must remain for all times the standard by which English blues are measured.

In spite of its interesting history, willow ware has been derided by many collectors, and openly scorned by others. It is the least popular—and consequently the least valuable—of English blue wares, with the possible exception of light blue Staffordshire, which, in strict china parlance, cannot be termed "old."

Willow ware in America has received its unenviable reputation from the fact that most of the pieces found in this country are late willow, made in Staffordshire after 1830, and having no connection with the original Caughley pieces.

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It is well for those who are interested in willow to bear in mind that there are many varieties of the pattern, and that the ware was made at a half-dozen or more potteries. The design is an English rendering or translation of Oriental *motifs*—based on a Chinese love story—more English than Oriental, and not good English at that. The British potter was less successful here in his attempts at imitating the Oriental. The pattern is nondescript, justifying Alice Morse Earle's criticism, that it is "neither fish, flesh, fowl, nor good red herring." It does not show the decorative quality so marked in all Chinese designs, nor does it equal other English patterns in spirit and force. Nevertheless, the ware forms a unique phase in the history of English ceramics, and no collection of china is complete without one or more specimens. Late willow should not be considered; but a piece of any of the early varieties, whether Caughley, Spode, Clews, Adams, or Wedgwood, would be of lasting interest and value.

Thomas Minton drew the first willow pattern for Thomas Turner of Caughley, about 1780, and early specimens are called both "Turner" and "Caughley." Sometimes the name "Salopian" is applied to

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the ware, for the pottery was located in the county of Salop. Minton, who invented the picture of the immortal princess, the bridge, the weeping-willow, and the pagoda, has not been thus honored. Minton's fame rests upon his own pottery, which is, perhaps, glory enough for one man.

Minton made willow ware himself, and also sold varieties of the pattern to other potters. To the untrained eye, the different adaptations look much alike. Count the apples, for by them shall the maker be known, also by the trees, and the number thereof. The original Caughley design contained six trees, which in china license have been designated as the apple, the willow, the fir, the plum, the peach. The sixth awaits a label. It is variously called the tree with spots, the tree with circles, and the tree with eyes. Thirty-two apples may be counted on the Caughley pieces. Spode copied this pattern, adding a slightly different fence. It is well, therefore, to study the fence. Three figures are crossing the bridge in the early patterns. It was a bold potter who added a fourth—for it is not accounted for in the willow story. The three people are the princess, Koong-shee, her lover, Chang of humble birth, and her honorable father, the Man-

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darin. To allude to these celebrated personages as "three men," as does the old Staffordshire rhyme, is quite inadequate.

Wedgwood altered the pattern slightly, by introducing two more apples, bringing the number up to thirty-four. Adams contented himself with thirty-two apples and Davenport reduced the number to twenty-five. Clews preferred thirty-four, but otherwise made no change in the Caughley picture. All used the same blue, except Clews, who gave his ware a deeper coloring.

If the apple counting is too great a task, the mark of the maker, found usually upon the back of the piece, will settle a disputed question. Wedgwood, Clews, and Spode used their full names, as was their custom in marking all their wares. Turner branded his pieces with a "C" for "Caughley"—often mistaken for a crescent, and sometimes added an "S" for "Salop." Crossed swords are occasionally found on Turner pieces. Still another Caughley mark is a single cross. "Warranted Staffordshire" is a stamp found upon many willow pieces made after the year 1800.

Beware of unmarked willow. It is either very new or was made during that colorless period of English earthenware following the decline of the



Willow fruit-basket



Staffordshire tureen



Staffordshire fruit-basket

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Staffordshire potteries. New willow is so poorly printed, however, that it can be told at a glance. The edges of the border do not meet, and the bridge is awry, and the trees mere blots and dabs of washed-out blue. Nothing could be uglier than this willow, which is the "Standard" ware of cheap restaurants and lunch-counters.

No other pattern under the sun, unless it be the onion, has been so often reproduced. This is another reason for the lack of interest on the part of collectors. It dulls the edge of enthusiasm to see the prototype of an old plate or platter, known to have rounded out a full century, displayed in a cheap store as a premium with a pound of tea. But no such fate can overtake a willow fruit-basket, for no modern maker of cheap wares would take the trouble to produce so delicate and costly a thing. Skilful manipulation was necessary in all pieced or open-work pieces, and this unique willow specimen is a charming example.

Although bowl collectors are not unknown, few people have specialized on sugar-bowls. Teapots have been over-famous; sugar-bowls not sufficiently so. Teapots have been hunted for years; sugar bowls openly neglected.

Jugs and mugs come and go in popular favor;

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plates have their periods of high favor; platters rise and fall in estimation, but teapots, like Tennyson's brook, go on forever. An indifferent teapot will have six patrons to a really beautiful sugar-bowl's one. And the price asked for the pot will be many times that of the bowl.

The word "teapot" is more alluring than "sugar bowl," suggests more interesting things; yet the connection between the two is intimate. It should be as difficult to separate them as the tea from the sugar, but collecting knows no laws and fortunately none can be made.

Complete tea-sets are extremely desirable, and relatively speaking are among the most valuable things antique dealers have to offer, yet a complete set will often remain unsold for weeks, while ten different people will beg to buy the teapot. When a dealer yields, as he sometimes does, to the enthusiasm of some teapot lady, he has difficulty with the other pieces. Fate sometimes sends a pitcher collector quick on the heels of the teapot strategist; but days and often weeks go by before the cups and saucers or the sugar-bowl find a buyer. Such stretches of inactivity are known to the antique fraternity as "rainy seasons," and they occur with a frequency unknown in the tropics. They make pos-

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sible unique conditions and sometimes extraordinary bargains.

Fifteen years ago he who would buy bowls, sugar or otherwise, had matters quite his own way. Two collections, each in its way notable, were formed about that time. One consists entirely of sugar-bowls, the other of plain bowls. The latter is admirable of its kind, though small, if comparison be made with California's celebrated pitcher collection, numbering seven hundred. The bowls, all told, are not more than fifty, and fifteen comprise Chinese, Korean and Siamese examples. Of English specimens there are about thirty. The sugar-bowl man gathered in greater numbers. He possessed an old New England house and had no problems of space to solve. He bought sugar-bowls from mixed motives. He liked them; he found them cheap; he had plenty of time, sufficient money, and he was first, last and always a collector. Moreover, he had a fancy for things which other people did n't care about. So he went his own china gait for many years. Sometimes he purchased wisely and picked up a gem, such as a dark blue Spode touched with red and gold, and again he would buy a cracked light blue thing which somebody had converted into a flower-pot. It was

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surprising how many sugar-bowls were used as flower-pots. Although not at all an horticulturist in the beginning, he became quite a specialist in Geraniums, "Wandering Jews" and other kitchen-window favorites. He soon found that a sugar-bowl with the plant in it could be purchased for about half the price asked for the empty bowl. Mathematics and old china have never had much connection; less so, he figured, with sugar-bowls than with anything else. Soft soap was discovered to be a sugar-bowl specialty, also garden seeds and rose leaves, the latter gathered for rheumatism.

Much interesting lore regarding herbs and simples was purchased with blue Staffordshire pieces, and the only regret the collector now has is that he did not put his knowledge into a book before it became merely a china dream.

The sugar-bowls have never gone through a weeding process, not one has been sold, only a few given away, so the collection is an interesting and valuable commentary on paste, glaze and decoration. From very early specimens without handles, scarcely more than small bowls with flat covers, to the tall, light-house types of 1840 there are many intervening steps. The oldest piece is a pewter sugar-box of the late seventeenth century.

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To one who has never thought about sugar-bowl designing, the variety comes as a surprise. There is almost as great a diversity to this collection as to an assortment of teapots. While sugar-bowls followed teapots closely in outline and decoration, there are a few types which seem to have no corresponding companions. Possibly they were used with silver teapots. They are small and round and usually without handles. If these necessary appendages are in evidence they are tiny and so close to the bowl as to be of no service. In this collection are twenty of these most attractive little things, mostly of Bristol. The owner states that in several cases he could have secured the accompanying cream pitcher, had he been sufficiently interested.

Spode china does not often lurk in farmhouse New England, though Spode crockery occasionally does. There are some good examples of the crockery, and a china sugar-bowl by Spode the elder.

Josiah Spode, Jr., operated his pottery between 1800 and 1827. From 1827 until 1833, the firm was carried on under the name, Spode, Son and Copeland. Later Copeland owned the factory. Copeland china is an outgrowth of Spode ware. Real Spode is marked "Spode," either in an imprint, or painted in blue, purple or red. Porcelain is

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marked "felspar porcelain," and stone ware is stamped "stoneware." Spode used many patterns, usually in combination with gold. The glaze is smooth and even, and the execution is of a high order. Spode porcelain is valuable. Spode earthenware is not especially so, although all Spode is interesting. Spode crockery is often found in this country. The blue is lighter than Staffordshire, but of interest to those who do not make "historical blue" a specialty. Spode sugar-bowls were prized by this man on account of their beautiful lines.

In arranging a collection so miscellaneous as to color and outline, several difficulties were encountered. The printed wares were too insistent to be located near the more subtle things of the eighteenth century, and a further division was necessary in the Staffordshire ranks. After the dark blue specimens had been placed in two cabinets, the pink, brown and light blue examples failed to blend. The pinks were charming by themselves, and one group of shelves between two windows was dedicated to pink. A similar scheme was tried for brown Staffordshire with equal results. As the wall was a light tan, the pink and warm brown were attractive with it. Light blue was found to look best strung along on a shelf, so twenty sugar-bowls decorated a

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five-inch shelf. "Medium blue" was placed in a cabinet. It did not take kindly to shelves. Mulberry looked well grouped; green Staffordshire shelved. A catalogue of all the pieces with illustrations is planned by the owner.

Collecting old punch-bowls can never become a common pastime, for like the Colonial beverages once brewed within their depths, they belong to the past.

It is quite as well, perhaps, that punch-bowls are few and far between. A large collection would be difficult to place. Like tureens, they require space, having little affinity for shelves and cupboards. A large collection would require a real house, never a cottage. As for dwellers in apartments they should confine their collecting proclivities to snuff-boxes, fans, and ivory monkeys, seldom to teapots, rarely to tureens, and never to punch-bowls. One inherited specimen might grace an old mahogany table in an apartment, and if you could have the choosing, it might be of Lowestoft, or better still of old Canton; not blue and white Canton but that highly figured, highly colored Canton, whereon Mandarins and gaily dressed ladies, flowers and butterflies, make a brilliant picture. If a seafaring great-grandfather is somewhere in the family it

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would probably be such a bowl, for few captains returned from the long East India voyage without pieces of this ware.

Colored Canton, or "gold medallion," as it is now called, is sold to-day, but it is unlike the old ware. Butterflies and flowers and gaily dressed people are still much in evidence, but the colors are not the same. The tone, the peculiar quality which makes so many old things interesting, is lacking. The explanation is quite simple. In the old days there was no American market, with its debasing influences. The ware was made for the Chinese, or for gifts to distinguished foreigners. In making the ware for "foreign devils," the Chinese added handles to the cups, and even made coffee services.

Most of this old Canton has a charming lavender tone in the gowns of the women, in the birds and flowers, but one looks in vain for this color in modern pieces. In its place is an insipid blue.

The Canton punch-bowls of our early shipping days were often ornamented in the base of the bowl with a full rigged ship. These bowls were made to order, or supposedly so. We suspect the wily Chinese of having a supply of bowls with an American vessel in the bottom, ready to be labeled with names and dates. There is a surprising likeness between the

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punch-bowl ships—the barques and the brigs, and other vessels of our early foreign trade. These marine trophies were taken home in triumph, and treasured evermore as mementoes of long and successful voyages, and of a wonderful “heathen land.”

The interest and excitement when the good ship arrived may be imagined, also the delight of opening chests and boxes filled with china, tea, carved ivory, sandalwood, and embroideries.

Much as this Canton was prized in the old days, Lowestoft was more highly valued. And it is a matter of record that many Lowestoft punch-bowls came over in the same vessel with Canton bowls, which spoils a certain theory. Some of these bowls were made to order and ornamented with monograms and initials, and occasionally with coats of arms.

Unless the Lowestoft were of historic interest, a punch-bowl of Canton, decorated with a vessel, labeled and dated would bring a better price at a china sale, though both would make lively bidding. Such pieces, however, rarely come under the hammer, for like great-grandfathers they are highly treasured by their owners and usually kept in the family.

But china vicissitudes are many and varied, and occasionally in a dusty little antique shop on the New England coast, a cracked and battered punch-

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bowl of Lowestoft is unearthed. Initialed specimens possess a keen personal interest and probably a collector who demanded proof conditions in all other pieces, would waive the question when it came to an old punch-bowl. Better a cracked one than none at all.

Old blue Canton, so highly prized when it was first imported, so lightly regarded by a succeeding generation, is now coming once more into favor. Collectors have long slighted this fine old ware, preferring the richer, deeper blues of Staffordshire china. The lack of variety and the difficulty of telling old pieces from those of later date, have been partly responsible for this lack of interest. Where a piece was inherited it was preserved with care. It signified a possible sea-faring great-grandfather, with all the surrounding romance of an East India voyage. But no glamour surrounded the piece of Canton in an antique shop. It grew gray with dust in the long intervals between the visits of those sufficiently interested to ask to inspect it. Light blue plates and platters and other comparatively valueless pieces found ready buyers, but the old Canton relic remained from season to season. It was, commercially speaking, a poor seller.

There are fashions in all things, even in collecting,

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and old Canton is now fashionable. The modern fancy for yellow walls, old mahogany, and blue china may have had something to do with the revival of this Chinese ware. The blue of Staffordshire is so rich and glowing that it pales, by contrast, lesser hues, but the fine gray-blue of Canton adapts itself to nearly every setting.

The modern Chinese potter clings to the traditions of his ancestors. New Canton differs little in shape from the old ware, and to the casual observer there is slight difference in the blue. Helmet pitchers, and teapots with twisted handles vary little from century to century. The "china ware" brought by Captain Haskett Derby of Salem, in the early days of the East India trade, is identical in outline with the new ware. The helmet pitchers and teapots with twisted handles, so highly valued by Salem dames, might easily be confused by the novice with their prototypes in the modern shop. But to those who have "lived" with old Canton, the new ware lacks tone, and when lifted seems heavier and of a coarser grain. The old pieces were thick, but more care and time were bestowed upon the making. The author of "The China Hunter's Club," who wrote her delightful book in the seventies, says of old Canton: "And in all these pieces the blue is dull and deep in tint,

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and with a certain ill-defined, vaporous quality at the edges of the lines, and the white is of the cool greenish tinge of a duck's egg. You can buy new Canton, but it is not old Canton." Look at your pieces of Canton and note the quality of the white—the greener the background the older it is. By 1820, the Canton imported into this country lost this peculiar tinge. The finest specimens are those associated with New England's early marine interests, but pieces of so late a date as 1850 are desirable.

The peculiar gray-blue of the early ware has been the theme of many Chinese poets and has inspired a few Occidentals into flights of fancy. The greenish tone of the glaze has been likened to the cool surface of ice, reflecting a clear sky, a comparison which recalls the Chinese sentence about green grass seen through melting snow. To the Oriental mind, the latter immediately suggests the "heavenly jade," just as the reference to the sky of a spring morning recalls the glorious blue of Hawthorne.

The "old" Canton of the antique shops is seldom of the early variety. Possibly in Salem, Newburyport, or Marblehead the eighteenth-century pieces might be encountered. These towns are full of it, but it is not for sale. It is safely confined in corner cupboards, where it will undoubtedly remain for



Blue Staffordshire—Clews and Phillips



Medium and dark blue Staffordshire in characteristic decoration



The Bristol strawberry pattern is a favorite in New England corner-cupboards

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decades to come. But the Canton of the shops, sixty, seventy, or even fifty years old—buy it if you have the opportunity, for you may not encounter it again.

The beauty in a cup and saucer collection comes as a pleasure to those who have merely thought of cups as cups and saucers as saucers. Not only in range of color and pattern, but in the outlines themselves the diversity is remarkable. There are cups like bowls, and cups like mugs, and cups like miniature barrels; there are low cups and high cups, those with handles and those without; those that are solid in color and those that have but a line of decoration, those that are black and those that are white, those that are quite plebeian like old printed crockery, and those that are of the very aristocracy of china. For real beauty the finer wares must be given preference when these articles are under consideration. Therefore such a collection is apt to be a bit costly.

It is possible, occasionally, to find old Chelsea cups and saucers and those of Sèvres. Imperial Sèvres—made during the period of the French empire—may be sometimes found, and not long ago six cups and saucers of vivid empire green with small medallion portraits of Josephine were put up for sale at a public auction. The interest

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in the pieces was so slight that they were withdrawn and later sold at private sale, but at a comparatively small price.

The green was intense, so much so that they "killed" everything else in china, and the fact that they were in almost perfect condition made even experienced collectors a little bit skeptical. The Napoleon mark on the base of each cup was almost startling in its freshness, while Josephine's rosy countenance looked as if painted yesterday. Yet the cups were genuine and when it was too late, several people realized that an unusual opportunity had been lost. Empire green they admitted was always vivid, and the fact that the specimens were in beautiful condition merely showed that they had been as properly taken care of as their value warranted. This surprising freshness, which many old pieces have, has puzzled many an expert. Few forgeries in china have this beguiling new look. They look old in every sense of the word and it is this extremely antique appearance that should count against them. Had the charming green Sèvres been of an olive tint, had the backgrounds of the medallions been ivory color instead of pure white, had the Imperial crown and the Imperial monogram been scratched or blurred, or if Josephine had been pallid

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instead of rosy, then the lovely cups might have been questioned.

Empire Sèvres must be placed by itself; like certain English wares of strong tone, it does not mix well with things of more delicate color. It needs its own particular corner, where it will well hold its own in most Imperial fashion.

Worcester cups and saucers may be found after much hunting; in fact, may easily be secured if an order is placed with a high price shop. Worcester takes on so many forms and guises that a number of cups and saucers would be needed to give an adequate idea of the ware. First would come a blue and white specimen made during Dr. Wall's connection with Worcester. This blue and white cup and saucer would be so Chinese in character that the mark on the base of the cup would alone convince, unless early Worcester were a very familiar ware. Worcester of the Wall period was so Oriental in design, outline and color that many amusing stories are told of its introduction into London. Dr. Johnson, it is said, was not convinced that it was an English product until a beautiful vase was broken, in order to show him that the foundation was not of Chinese clay.

One blue and white pattern, called "Queen

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Charlotte's" is thoroughly English. It is conventionalized in treatment and could never be mistaken for Oriental. It was made after the Chinese craze had subsided and when English patterns were judged on their own merits. When Charlotte was queen the Worcester pottery, in company with many others, had passed the purely imitative period, so interesting in all its phases.

For old Worcester in all its ramifications the shops of London are unsurpassed, Oxford Street and Piccadilly, with their numerous tributaries, offering entertainment for days. The London "clarks" are long-suffering where the American tourist is concerned, and two or three in Oxford Street should be canonized. What lovely things there were in old Chelsea, Derby, Bow, and particularly in Worcester. The almost complete tea-set of Queen Charlotte pattern which graced an Orchard Street window still lingers in dreams, and one small saucer gives substance to the picture. It is deep, like early Lowestoft saucers, and would almost hold a cup of tea. It probably did on more than one occasion. The great Dr. Johnson, like Washington, is said to have cooled his tea in his saucer, and it does not take much imagination to believe it, less so with Johnson than with our own

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Washington, who, we like to feel, was always a Chesterfield of politeness.

Several charming cups and saucers of blue scale are associated with a shop in High Holborn. They did not cross the Atlantic with the Charlotte saucer. They were very blue—the scale so solid as to make a background and give the impression of blue cups. Against this rich tone were small white panels painted in birds of brilliant colors. With the cups was a tall mug cylinder in shape having, as a ground-work, a deep pink scale, broken here and there with white reserves on which were painted little landscapes. It too, remained in the shop, as did the entire contents, so far as this particular china enthusiast was concerned, except a small bowl of Scotch luster, which does not belong to a Worcester story, nor to any story in fact, except a rather rambling one about bowls. No Worcester bowl graces the collection, but just around the corner from Oxford Street, somewhere on Baker Street, S. W., or is it E. C., there is a bowl of salmon scale and salmon-colored roses. A memory, not strong for figures, recalls it as being at twenty-one pounds, thirteen shillings and six-pence. Whatever the cost, it is a beauty, not large of course, at that price, but, as pieces in the market go, a remarkably

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good example of a rare type of Worcester.

Another shop, this one near Piccadilly Circus, contained among beautiful specimens of eighteenth century china, two excellent pieces of "powder blue," in the shape of tall mugs. "Powder blue" is a term associated with both Sèvres and Worcester and also with Chinese porcelain. At the Worcester pottery the "powder blue" followed the early blue underglaze decoration. In the underglaze pieces, the ground was white and the decorations were blue. The other scheme reversed the order and gave to the china a blue background slightly granulated or "powdered," upon which white decorations were disposed. The cups of Worcester scale are usually made with handles and are found in both tea and coffee sizes. The early blue and white Worcester was made when the handleless cup was used in England. To have added a handle would have made them too un-Oriental to have passed for Chinese. When Dr. Wall founded the pottery works which were to take such high rank in ceramic annals, he had no other motive in view than to cope with the Chinese trade, which in blue and white ware was assuming alarming proportions. As his venture progressed and took on a measure of success, which in his most optimistic moments he had

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not foreseen, he followed other and higher ideals.

There are several other styles of Worcester which should be included in a representative cup and saucer assortment; Worcester in the Japanese taste, and Worcester made under the Flight and Barr connection—the latter quite complicated in its numerous divisions; and Worcester made under Chamberlain; and Worcester decorated by Billingsley; and so on and on until a fine, large cabinet held nothing but Worcester cups and saucers. Indeed, it would be impossible for it to hold anything else if all the “steps” in the history of the factory were actually represented.

Soon after Robert Hancock left Battersea, copper plate printing appeared in great perfection at Worcester, and from that time on, Hancock’s name was closely identified with the process. It is quite possible that some unknown worker at Battersea antedated the other claimants. It is also possible that Hancock and Sadler may have worked simultaneously and independently, such being the manner of inventors from the beginning of time. It may be that Hancock was the maker of the first enamels bearing copper plate decorations, and that the glory is well earned by him. However that may be, by 1760 the process was well established in several

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places. Horace Walpole was writing enthusiastically about Battersea snuff-boxes and the wits of the day were making rhymes about Frederick the Great and his popularity with Hancock of Worcester. To-day these bits of Battersea grace famous cabinets, and the picturesque countenance of Frederick the Great looks out from mugs, punch-bowls, and cups and saucers of noted collections.

Transfer printing went through many developments. It was at its best when it had the effect of engraving. When color was applied to give life and interest, much of the charm vanished. Under Hancock and in the best Sadler work the lines were sharp and clear, and bold as in an etching. In passing the hand over the print in the early work the lines can be felt as in an engraving. Later this quality was lost and there is a smoothness about the surface which does not suggest copper plate. In blue Staffordshire, there is no effect of engraving and the wonder is that this process can give a result so unlike.

Worcester cups and saucers richly painted are almost too fine for an American collection. The other things cannot live up to them, and, like the Imperial Sèvres, they must have their own corner. This separating to the four points of a room or house would

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not suit the usually American owner of old china. He likes everything in a heap, so to speak; shelves crowded with everything under the sun, or cupboards fairly bursting with his possessions. Cups and saucers do not take kindly to this miscellaneous treatment, far less so than bowls or pitchers. Cups with handles seem to be on a different plane from those without, and the real porcelain pieces, such as have been described, cannot be mixed with heavy wares, and those strong in color are too assertive for delicate specimens—and so it is well to build a large house before taking up the cup and saucer fad. It takes active possession once acquired—and it becomes the more insidious on account of the “practical and useful” atmosphere that hangs over every specimen.

The fancy is appealed to by the thought that each cup and saucer could be used; that under certain circumstances the whole collection might be mustered out to grace a patriotic or other interesting occasion. Some of the old Chelsea, Worcester and Sèvres cups would make wonderful after-dinner coffee cups, but the nervous strain as to what might happen might mar the pleasure of using.

Spode would make an interesting and highly decorative section, for the colors used by Josiah Spode

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in his fine china are remarkable for their range and beauty. Spode tea-sets are sometimes put up for sale with every piece intact, and they seem to fill the middle ground between the highly ornamental Worcester and Sèvres and the very quiet wares. Spode cups usually have handles and there is nothing about them that savors too highly of museum specimens. They could be used with real comfort and would stand a good deal of careful wear. Bow is too old and too valuable except for the highest shelf in some cabinet where real safety is warranted. The downfall of Horace Walpole's cabinet of fine "perceline" is, however, recalled. And the king who built a pyramid of teapots—one of the Georges, if we mistake not—lost his topmost specimen through the carelessness of the men who erected the structure. So to be master or mistress of the situation, though china fall, is to be greatly desired, for there seems at times a grim fatality hanging over most fine collections. Still the successful century mark attained by many fragile cups and saucers leads to the belief that there is after all much china luck and that it is quite evenly distributed.

No cup and saucer collection would be complete without several pieces of Lowestoft, one at least of Bristol, New Hall, and of the Welsh potteries,

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Swansea and Nantgarw. And surely no assortment would be more than a mere fragment without all the dear old crockery wares which make up the bulk of three-fourths of the collections in this country. Blue Staffordshire alone would fill many a shelf and when it came to pink luster and the various lavender-sprigged cottage pieces, and the many, many things which belong to the 1820 to 1850 period, one room could easily be crowded to its limits.

Never bowls just because they are bowls; nor pitchers because they are not plates, nor tobys because they are not pepper-boxes, nor cups and saucers because they are not platters. But cups and saucers because they mean something beyond mere paste, glaze and decoration.





CHAPTER XI

GENERALIZING

GRANTED that the specialist in collecting knows a joy which the miscellaneous collector does not, and that he who gathers in plates, or bowls, or jugs, or teapots, or china cows, or pepper-boxes has a particular pleasure, like unto no other, it is none the less true that the day of the collector of more catholic tastes is surely coming—in fact, is already here. As a writer on old furniture aptly expresses it, “The miscellaneous collector is a deal more interesting to his friends.” It is possibly true that “the pepper-box fiend” and the mug specialist are a bit tiresome when they ride their hobbies. Certainly they are tiresome to each other. A pepper-box seems a foolish thing to your mug

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man. A mug seems unimaginative to your hunter of pepper-boxes. And it would be as impossible to interest the mug collector in pitchers as it would to charm the pepper-box man with salt-spoons. Mugs and pepper-boxes to the end of the collecting chapter, unless some strange circumstance breaks the spell.

If either builds a house he is quite likely to become interested in all old things. In furnishing his home he will want old pewter for certain places, old blue plates for another, old copper for a third, and so on through his house. Four-post bedsteads will add greatly to the attractiveness of his bedrooms, and the real Colonial atmosphere will not be complete without old corner washstands and equally quaint wash-bowls and pitchers. And ere long his pepper-boxes or his mugs are forgotten in his keen interest in brass curtain rosettes for his windows, iron latches for his doors, and brass and iron fire dogs for his hearths. If he is building along the early Colonial period, when corner cupboards were made into the walls, he places his treasured pepper-boxes, if pepper-boxes have been his idols, in one cupboard, but in the other, for he would surely have as many as two, he chooses pewter, or old blue crockery or possibly copper luster of various shapes. He is

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now not only a collector, but a period decorator and furnisher. He becomes very discriminating about historical accuracy, and draws sharp lines between 1730 and 1740 things. Also color schemes absorb him considerably. We find him regretting that many of his pepper-boxes are so lacking in decorative quality and wondering if mugs after all—but that is treason! But none the less we see him, from time to time, giving away his once treasured articles, or exchanging them for pitchers, snuff-boxes or steins. But it takes something as important, as fascinating as a real house to turn the specialist into a miscellaneous collector. The true decorative instinct cannot exist long with the mania for one particular thing.

Travel sometimes unhinges the collecting mind. A trip to Japan has been known to turn a blue plate enthusiast from the straight and narrow path of historical china. Never more could the deep blue of Clews and Wood and Stevenson fascinate as of old. The glamour of things Oriental filled the mind. Old Satsuma gently routed the once prized English wares, nor did the latter ever regain their charm.

Once a collector of bowls became more rabid than ever after her visit to the Orient. Everything seemed to assume a bowl-shaped aspect in Japan,



Wedgwood black basalt



Chinese white porcelain

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even the hats of the "rickshaw" men. There were rice bowls, tea bowls, saki bowls, flower bowls, and many, many others. Every potter from the early primitive days down to the present seemed to have first made a bowl. How exquisite those Japanese specimens were—the choicest ones wrapped in yellow bags; tiny bowls of jade and big bowls of old Imari, and medium sized bowls of Satsuma, Kyoto, and Banko! Pottery, porcelain, lacquer and metal were represented. A bowl of crystal was the chief treasure—yet when they were all arranged in cabinets of Japanese wood, each on a little stand of teak, it was hard to say which was *the* bowl of the collection. They even won over several skeptics who had always looked upon the bowl fancy as a mild species of madness.

Nor did the beauty of the Japanese bowls dull the interest of the bowl lady in her old English and American specimens, collected at an earlier period. This was indeed a test, and proved her to be loyal beyond many collectors. To turn from jade to copper luster and from copper luster to Satsuma, and back to Staffordshire, finding them equally interesting, was a collecting achievement.

Doubtless the bowl lady could build a dozen houses and be entirely willing for her architect and

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her decorator to decide all the details. She would ask only for sufficient wall space for the bowls and such treatment as would give one room to the Japanese specimens and another to the English ones—a corner to those from Mexico and a place somewhere for ancient Peruvian bowls of wood, and so on through the house. They could choose Italian Renaissance, fifteenth century Gothic, Colonial, or modern French. They might even forget the staircase, but they must remember every bowl.

It is perhaps needless to say that the bowl lady will never become a miscellaneous collector. She could not if she would; she could more easily part with her life than with her hobby. She has the collecting faculty in one particular line developed to a remarkable degree, but she has not a particle of decorative feeling—and could never appreciate the satisfaction of securing a Queen Anne pair of candlesticks to stand on a Queen Anne table nor of finding a George II punch ladle to go with other old silver of the same period.

Nor could she know of the keen pleasure of gradually picking up, bit by bit, enough old china to fill a corner cupboard in the most effective manner; a fine deep blue Staffordshire platter thirteen inches long for the center position of the middle shelf, a

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teapot, sugar-bowl and pitcher of the same forceful blue placed in front of the platter—rather a small set, as such sets go, so as not to make the blue too insistent, nor to fill the cupboard too much; two rather important pieces of copper luster on either side of the set, say a quart pitcher and a beaker or a mug—rather a deep luster so as to hold ground with the blue;—two bowls next, or a creamer and a bowl, one on either side—of blue and green, or blue and yellow in that delightful “splashed ware” of humble origin and rare decorative quality.

One or two small things could now be tucked here and there. The color question has taken care of itself with the rich blue, and glowing luster, and the gayly decorated pieces, the blue of the latter almost as strong as that of the platter and teaset. A pepper-box or two and a few cups and saucers could now be added, provided they were not too pale; and several medium sized plates, if they had real decorative value, could line the sides. Shelf one, or the center shelf would now be finished—as finished as any shelf in a cupboard ever is, for a new possession may make a different scheme necessary. The lower shelf may now take either pink china or china quite green, provided copper luster is used liberally. Three or four good pieces will relate the two shelves pleas-

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antly to each other. A dark blue pepper-box and a small blue creamer would also be effective here, but blue should not predominate. The upper shelf would need comparatively small things unless the cupboard were quite large, when a teapot may form the center object with cups and saucers grouped about. Cottage figures would look well on this shelf. Bowls also go well when placed above the eye, as the base of a bowl is always an important part of the design, a fact potters well realize. There are no handles to add variety, no spouts to become an important *motif*—just the bowl itself and its standard or base.

Oftentimes a cupboard is filled entirely with old blue, or with pink luster, or with copper luster, and such schemes are charming. The arrangement is comparatively simple when this is the case. When there is a variety of old china to arrange, both color and design must be taken into consideration. Dark blue and light blue are not very pleasing together—although copper luster will in this case be found an excellent neutralizer. Light pink is apt to lose charm when placed near dark blue, also china with a white background is upsetting to the general harmony. A cupboard full of china with a light ground and small decorations is often attractive, but that is



The miscellaneous collector has an equal liking for old china, pewter, glass and Sheffield plate. Collection of Mrs. Harlan Creelman, Auburn, N. Y.

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another matter. There is one very safe principle to follow in any arrangement of china; let it all be on the same social equality, as it were. Do not place blue Staffordshire with any of the really fine old English wares—as Chelsea, Derby, Worcester or Bow. It is like putting pewter and silver together—more incongruous because there is no color relation between them. Do not add colored figures or statuettes to the old cupboard unless they are Staffordshire or other crockery wares. Keep the real china (the porcelain things) for one place, and the deep blues, and light blues and the copper lusters in another. The porcelain pieces are for cabinets, not cupboards, and while interesting and valuable are quite capable of spoiling the quaintness of the entire arrangement.

Hard paste and soft paste pieces should not be mixed. Only three English potteries achieved the coveted distinction of making “hard” china. Newhall should be named, yet hardly ranked with Bristol and Plymouth.

A curious fate has, in one way, robbed Plymouth of many of its laurels by conferring upon Lowestoft a “hard paste fame.” It is now believed that the actual china made at Lowestoft was soft paste, although several authorities still hold to the opinion

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that hard paste porcelain was carried there to be decorated. But the part that Plymouth had in the making of hard, hard china, often of Oriental appearance, has not always been appreciated. The making of this beautiful ware covered only fourteen years. William Cookworthy, Quaker, philosopher and chemist, sold his patents to Richard Champion, of Bristol, whither his factory had been moved.

We know Bristol in this country through the charming things in earthenware that fill old cupboards—teapots with strawberry decorations and dear old bowls ornamented in queer flowers in blue and orange. Occasionally the Chantilly sprig is seen on teapots and bowls, usually with a solid line of color, which many collectors consider the real mark of Bristol. Inasmuch as a great deal of this ware is unmarked, it is as good a stamp as any, But in Leeds this color line is also found. Some people pin great faith to swan knobs on teapots and sugar-bowls. But in Leeds this device is also prominent. As a matter of fact, several potteries used swan knobs and colored bands, while Chantilly sprigs powdered the surface of Leeds, Bristol, Pinxton, and at one time the output of all the potteries, where that remarkable china painter, William Billingsley, happened to work. Famous for his roses,

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he used in his early work the charming little "French" sprigs, which also appeared in a modified form on Lowestoft and Plymouth, but never in the Billingsley manner.

A scattered "all-over" method of decoration was not used at Lowestoft nor at Plymouth. One finds the sprig in the bottom of teacups and in the center of saucers, neat, decorous and unassuming. The little Tudor rose is also found in great numbers, particularly on so-called Lowestoft. Thomas Rose, a refugee, was long credited with this little Lowestoft flower, but it blooms on all china of the eighteenth century.

Thomas Rose of Lowestoft, famous in his day for the way he painted the national flower, should rank second with Billingsley, although the methods of the two men were quite different and the results, as might be expected, equally unlike. If you have any Lowestoft, note the small, round roses which this industrious man is supposed to have painted. It has been said that the rose was merely used by him as a signature and that he had no wish to laud the English flower. So firmly rooted has been the tradition regarding this decorator that many pieces of Chinese ware long called "Lowestoft" are associated with the myth. Small roses are discovered

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on this thick Oriental china and pointed out as the work of Thomas Rose. If china was sent from the Orient to Lowestoft to be decorated, perhaps the roses are the work of this man. But it is safer in view of the large doubt to confine conjecture to the pieces actually made in the Lowestoft potting district. Few American collectors own such specimens or, if they do, are quite apt to call them something else. If Mr. Rose made all the tiny flowers found on Oriental Lowestoft he must have been the busiest person in the kingdom—even more so than poor Billingsley, who painted roses as if mad on the subject.

Bristol porcelain is not very common over here, less so than Chelsea, Derby or Worcester. Private collections, are now under consideration, not shops, where it is possible to find almost all good things with time, patience and money. England has many private collections of hard paste Bristol china and very varied they are with tea services and all manner of ornamental things in the way of vases and figurines.

The Plymouth factory made many vases and the beauty and grace of its biscuit figures, the four seasons and kindred subjects, made it famous during its brief day. To-day these old figures bring high

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prices. They were made in a limited quantity only, and are difficult now to find. Wedgwood, generous to many fellow potters, looked with suspicion upon all of Cookworthy's undertakings and was never over kind to Champion. The latter's experiments in America alarmed him. He feared the properties of American clay and the influence of "American goods" in England, though if any potter had little to fear from competitors it was Josiah Wedgwood. Both Cookworthy and Champion suffered from lack of funds. The latter was obliged to abandon his American enterprise entirely. What might have happened if the Carolina pottery had prospered makes interesting speculation. Wedgwood's fame in all probability would not have been dimmed but new and unexpected things might have happened. Trenton and other strongholds of American clay workers might have been forced to have shared honors with Richard Champion and his Carolina undertaking.

The town of Bristol had had many kilns when this talented potter set up his own works. Delft and coarse earthen ware had been made there at an early date, and the town in company with Liverpool, Lambeth, Wrotham and the Staffordshire district had a well-earned pottery reputation. Champ-

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ion's most successful period followed his purchase of the Cookworthy patent and the re-establishing of his own factory. This was in the year 1773. The Plymouth properties passed out of Cookworthy's hands and Plymouth as Plymouth was made no more. But as with the Chelsea and Derby merger, new life was given to the larger factory. Champion's greatest claim to our consideration is the fact that under many discouragements he persevered in his desire to make a paste, which would equal in appearance Oriental porcelain. In this he did not succeed, but the beauty of Bristol, not earthen ware, will come as a surprise to those who are unfamiliar with the finer side of Bristol's output. Statuettes, vases and ornamental pieces of all kinds, together with tea and coffee services, form a portion of the articles. The making of presentation services was a feature, also memorial busts.

Plymouth porcelain does not assume so many guises, yet in its brief career many beautiful things were made. Cookworthy's discovery of a Cornish clay which had the properties necessary for "true china" was, in a lesser way, as important as Frederick Böttger's discovery, leading to the making of Meissen, Berlin and Vienna with one great difference, however; hard paste porcelain became an

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established product of Continental factories, while it flourished only for a short period on English soil. But though of brief duration the Plymouth factory achieved one important thing. It developed very Oriental looking ware, not alone in outline and decoration but in the quality of the paste and decoration. The fact that many tea services made at Plymouth were identical in pattern with those long-called Lowestoft, leads to the supposition that much that is really Plymouth has in the past been called Lowestoft. There are light house teapots bearing one of the Plymouth marks, the alchemist's sign for tin, a combination of the figures, 2 and 4, which are so like those dear old "Lowestoft" articles brought straight from Peking that one wonders that the Lowestoft puzzle is as simple as it is; and those tall vases, flaring at top and bottom, one of Cookworthy's specialties, how like they are to those which we long have named "Lowestoft," though now marked by careful museums curators "Sino-Lowestoft."

Why, may we ask, was Cookworthy so successful in imitating Oriental ware, why has he had so little credit for it, and why has nearly every hard paste thing, Chinese or English, been attributed to Lowestoft? It is idle to speculate over the Lowestoft

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theory. Indeed, there are many excellent reasons for believing that china was taken to Lowestoft from other places to be decorated, but these theories lead away from Plymouth and Bristol. Cookworthy's finding real china clay in Cornwall proved of lasting benefit to potters. In the potters' hall of fame he truly merits his own niche.

In 1800 the distinctions between hard and soft paste disappeared. Josiah Spode experiments which led to the combining of bone ash with china stone made possible a different composition. At Swansea and Nantgarw soft paste was made for a few years.

Old blue Davenport has had scant courtesy paid it in the past, but like many neglected wares, is having greater recognition now. "Flowing-blue" has been almost as scornfully decried as willow, perhaps, because at one time it was almost as plentiful. It is still in certain districts, but its value is steadily increasing. There are several makes of flowing-blue, but the pieces bearing the Davenport anchor are the most desirable. The blue is attractive, deep, but not blackish, and the printing invariably good. There is a slight difference sometimes in the clearness of the blue. A teapot, for instance, will be sharp and crisp in the printing, and the sugar bowl, with the same decorations, show a cloudiness at the

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edges, as if the potter had applied his color on too moist a background. The blue is blurred in places—all very pleasing in effect, but not the potter's best work. In looking over a number of old sets this characteristic is noticeable.

Modern flowing-blue comes in two varieties—the cheapest of the cheap, usually marked "Petrus Rag-out," costing about fifteen cents a plate, and a very excellent quality made in England and comparing favorably in price with good modern wares. The cheap plates, however, are more like the old ones. Were it not for their low price and a certain "slap-dash" appearance they might deceive at first sight, even if one were quite familiar with the genuine. The better quality is more carefully made. The blue is richer and the body of a much better grade. As luncheon sets they go very well, suiting certain backgrounds better than more dainty wares. But it seems a pity to use new flowing-blue when the old may be secured, and at no greater outlay than would be paid for a really good set of modern china—not so much, if some of the best English makes were under consideration. It might take time to get a dinner set together, but a breakfast or luncheon set could be managed in a summer, or perhaps in a day if one were very lucky. Here is where the miscel-

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of china, else it is merely interesting from a student's standpoint as a fragment of paste, glaze or decoration, regarded as a fragment, and kept merely as a reference. Possibly, where the association was very great even a fragment would be worthy of a place in a cabinet. If the guaranteed history of being real Washington china, actually owned by our first President, accompanied a very cracked and battered cup, plate or pitcher, it would be of exceptional interest in spite of its condition. Also there are certain rare wares, like Pallisy or Henri Deux, of which the smallest fragment would enrich an entire collection. The pieces of the world are numbered and located and are not to be purchased.

The average collection in America, as has been pointed out, runs more to the printed crockery of the late eighteenth century or early nineteenth than to finer wares. Some of these things are in perfect condition, proof in every sense of the word; others have imperfections so slight as to be noticeable only on most careful inspection. Now that mending and restoring are so well done, so cleverly, in fact, that even experts are deceived, this important branch is well worth investigation. It is surprising what life-like handles, spouts and covers are made by professional china menders. Several men in this coun-



Old china and furniture. Collection of Miss Annabel Stetson, Brunswick, Maine



An interior in the Gilman Manse Yarmouth, Maine

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try have earned well-deserved fame for their work in repairing. They paint in the pattern where sections are missing most skilfully.

This skilful treatment has not been attained without certain dark episodes. There have been “doctored” pieces sold as perfect at certain auction sales where much tribulation has followed. So prevalent was the doctoring of dark blue historical ware about ten years ago that many people were unwilling to buy unless the pieces were examined with a microscope. No discredit is intended to the restorers of old china, only to the unscrupulous dealers who profit by their skill.

Whether our coverless specimens shall go uncovered, have new covers, or wait for the happy turning up of the originals is a matter each collector must decide for himself. Meanwhile if you have the opportunity to buy a really beautiful article do not hesitate to do so if it be minus the cover—also if you find a cover and are known to have china luck, secure that and wait for the happy ending of the purchase.





CHAPTER XII

IN PRAISE OF CUPBOARDS

THE identification of old china is far easier than that of old furniture, so far as the personality back of the article is concerned—although the styles and periods in furniture are simpler to learn than those of china. The two hardly afford comparisons, for while we applaud the reproduction of old furniture we have only censure for the potters who copy old china, possibly because the new china in the old manner is usually sold for “antique,” while the new furniture makes no pretense beyond being a faithful copy.

Inasmuch as the old furniture bee is often accompanied by the old china bee, the study of one usually leads to the other. If you begin with china you must sooner or later find a cupboard to house it, or, if you first have the cupboard, you end by

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hunting for something to fill it—so it is hard to separate the two even in a book. How attractive the combination may be is suggested in my illustrations.

The Pergolesi cabinet shown in this chapter was made expressly to display fine china. It is an eighteenth century adaptation of the old dresser idea—the dresser being an outgrowth of the early *dressoir* with its ornamented table-ware and fine linen cover. The *dressoir* and the *credence* were closely related. The use of the word “dresser” to designate a bureau or dressing-table is modern and quite incorrect. It is purely American—and American of certain localities only. To the New England housewife, dresser means a kitchen cupboard filled either with pewter or with more modern ware. It is no longer a dining-room piece of furniture, even in that part of the country, but rather a humble bit of construction full of every-day kitchen things. Lowell in his “Bigelow Papers” speaks of the firelight brightening the pewter on the dresser.

Coming back to the cabinet painted by Pergolesi, it will be seen that while ornamented in a sumptuous manner, the old china loses none of its decorative quality by the proximity of the painted flowers and garlands. Pergolesi’s manner in this case is rather

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naturalistic, but decidedly pleasing. The arabesques on the sides are sufficiently in the classical mode to stamp the period. At the time that Flaxman and Hackwood were modeling classic heads and garlands for Wedgwood's famous jasper ware, Pergolesi and Angelica Kauffmann were decorating fine furniture in a similar way for Robert Adam and Thomas Sheraton.

Flora, Venus, Pan, Cupid, the Three Graces and other mythological subjects slipped from Miss Kauffmann's gifted brush with a skill and ease which won for her a wide reputation. She preferred to paint miniatures of distinguished persons, but it was her furniture that brought her lasting fame. When an auctioneer wishes to reach the climax in describing a piece of painted satinwood, he adds—"and decorated by Angelica Kauffmann," and nothing else is needed, although a great deal might be said.

The eccentric Angelica must have worked day and night to have decorated a fraction of the furniture attributed to her. That she actually painted all these tables, cabinets and writing-desks few people believe. The real Kauffmann pieces are catalogued, located and well known. When an authentic example comes up for sale its past ownership is a mat-



China cabinet painted by Pergolesi

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ter of furniture history; and little enlargement on its beauty is necessary.

There is, however, a good deal of painted furniture in Adam, Sheraton and Hepplewhite design decorated in a classic manner. It is genuinely old and very valuable, and most difficult to secure. It is sometimes the work of Zucchi and Cipriani, sometimes of Pergolesi, but more often that of lesser artists, who were clever enough to catch the real spirit of classic decoration. Pergolesi—Michael Angelo Pergolesi—was a designer of furniture as well as an embellisher, but the other Italians—Cipriani and Zucchi—merely decorated, while the gifted Kauffmann painted the medallions and intricate panels, leaving the garlands, arabesques and other details to one of her companions.

Pergolesi and Cipriani went to England in company with Robert Adam when he returned home after a long period of classic research in Italy. Antonio Zucchi followed later. Miss Kauffmann was German by birth, but English by long residence, an erratic, gifted person, who furnished material for much amusing comment in letters and diaries of the day. Joshua Reynolds, it appears, was her special hero and idol, a circumstance which caused him much annoyance and embarrassment. In that delightful

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book "The Jessamy Bride," in which Goldsmith and Reynolds, Garrick and Dr. Johnson and others of that brilliant and talented coterie are depicted, Miss Kauffmann is presented in a most picturesque light. Her marriage finally to Zucchi surprised her friends, and was so appreciated by Reynolds that he permitted her to decorate a mantel in his house. And this beautiful piece of work is now quite as perfect as when it was executed, about 1785. There are medallions and classic groups and a lot of charming detail, which we may believe the artist painted with her own hands.

In collecting old furniture, chairs more than any other pieces seem to inspire enthusiasm. There are more in existence in the first place, they can be put to a practical use in the second, and, comparatively speaking, they are not expensive. One may go on collecting chairs with a light conscience. One can hardly have too many. There is always a place for another. Besides the purchase of an occasional chair does not upset the family income, while the buying of an old cabinet might mean economy for months.

Your true collector does not mind curtailing household expenses in the interest of the Cause. He or she will gladly omit soup for months, skip salad or dispense with dessert. One brave spirit cheerfully

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gives up summer travel, in the interest of salt-glaze, while a devoted lover of old mahogany has turned vegetarian in order to fill his house with Sheraton and Hepplewhite—quite the best argument in favor of a vegetable diet which the writer has ever encountered.

The ways and means of collectors are mysterious and past finding out. Only those who have the mania highly developed can understand the joy and the reason of going without what you need in order to secure what you want. That you do not need thirty-eight blue teapots or eleven mahogany cabinets is no argument at all. It is rather an incentive to secure immediately the thirty-ninth and the twelfth.

The only real rift in the mahogany and china lute is that the collecting spirit seldom dominates an entire family. There are always those who remain to scoff. Possibly a wise providence regulates these matters. It is perhaps well to have at least one person in every household who remembers the existence of landlords, tax collectors, insurance agents and plumbers, and so to our cabinets.

Collecting cabinets, like collecting bedsteads, may be made an expensive hobby. If fancy runs to the painted pieces of the late Georgian period, the pas-

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time may be made quite as costly as the fad for jade or crystals. Or, if the earlier Georgian period is chosen, when Chippendale and his contemporaries were making elaborate carved cabinets for books and china, first editions will be inexpensive in comparison.

Georgian cabinets, like Georgian chairs, cover a multitude of designs. The very ornate cabinets designed by Chippendale would hardly be recognized as his work by collectors over here, unless more than average study had been given to the matter. In this country, collectors are not always connoisseurs. In England, the two are often amalgamated. It would be a pity, however, to limit the mahogany hobby to only those who can talk wisely of technical differences. In fact it would seem a fair exchange to divide the furniture and the wisdom, not giving too much to one person.

Too much study sometimes takes off the edge of that first enthusiasm which finds everything old delightful. When that very critical attitude is attained, where only museum pieces satisfy, something has been lost. To scoff at honest Windsors, finding pleasure only in inlaid satinwood chairs means that a certain zest has gone out of the furniture question. To prefer Chippendale's ribbon-backs to his

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plainer Dutch chairs shows a greater feeling for ornament than for structure, and this point of view comes from no dislike of simplicity, nor from any dullness of perception as to which is the better design, but merely because the study of detail has been carried so far that one sees only the detail; the chair itself is a mere framework for the carving. To such collectors a plain corner cupboard is a piece of timber.

Cupboards and cabinets, while closely related, are not in the same class. In the eighteenth century the distinction was carefully made. In the seventeenth, cupboards and presses were nearly akin, but cabinets, always more refined, were elevated on legs and showed all the art at the designer's command. During Charles II's reign they were of great beauty, and from that time until the close of the eighteenth century, they were the most important articles made, so far as workmanship was concerned. "Cabinet-makers" were known long before "furniture-makers." Our use of the latter term was quite unknown in those days. "Cabinet-work" had a wider significance later than that of mere cabinet-making. It expressed fine work in wood irrespective of the design, but for a long period it meant literally the making of cabinets. In the large furniture shops where

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men were apprenticed they began with stools and graduated with cabinets.

In collecting, to-day, if the finest work in carving, inlay, marquetry or painted decoration is desired no chair will satisfy. The opportunity presented to the maker of chairs was not nearly so great as to the maker of cabinets. Large surfaces of wood made possible a complete design, and the rectangular doors offered a splendid field for a large conventionalized decoration, or for a real picture if the maker were equal to it.

Yet when all has been said in regard to the aristocracy of cabinets it is doubtful if American collectors will ever be keenly interested. Corner cupboards will doubtless charm to the end of collecting days, and if of simple American origin so much the better. These self same old built-in pieces of furniture, however, have an excellent pedigree which well bears investigation.

In the first edition of his book, Chippendale says, in speaking of a china-cabinet, "It is a very neat china case upon a frame, with glass doors in the front and ends; betwixt the middle feet is a stretcher, with a little canopy which will hold a small figure. This design must be executed by the hands of an ingenious workman, and when neatly japann'd will appear very

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beautiful." In speaking of another he says: "It is not only the richest and most magnificent in the town, but perhaps in all Europe. I had a particular pleasure in retouching and finishing this design, but should have much more in the execution of it, as I am confident I can make the work more beautiful and striking than the drawing. The proportion and harmony of the several parts will then be view'd with advantage and reflect mutual beauty upon each other. The ornaments will appear more natural and graceful, and the whole construction will be so much improv'd under the ingenious hand of a workman as to make it fit to adorn the most elegant apartment."

It may seem a far cry from a Colonial corner cupboard to a cabinet of the Italian Renaissance, yet their relationship, though distant, is well established. They are remote kin, claiming descent through a long line of ancestry which, if we cared to go back far enough, would show a very early origin. Investigation would lead back to the days of Grecian ornament and give point to the adage that there is nothing new under the sun. Other styles could be brought into the circle and the story, all told, would be a long one.

History in design repeats itself and certain *motifs* appear over and over down through the cen-

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turies until they are so well known that they are scarcely noted. Certain bits of ornament, like the acanthus leaf, the egg-and-dart border, and the Greek fret, are ever present in architectural details, in furniture, and in many small articles of daily use. To trace these details in the everyday articles of our homes is one of the pleasant by-paths in the study of historic ornament as applied to household furniture.

Chippendale, during the interesting middle period of his designing, made many book-cabinets. They were in the rather ponderous style which he at that time affected. His early Dutch manner with its pleasing simplicity was over; his graceful French style he had not yet adopted. The heavy classic, the Gothic and the Chinese appealed to him, and these he exploited in his book-cabinets. They seem unnecessarily massive as we look at them to-day; as if books were something so precious that they had to be incarcerated in order not to escape. Placed behind doors, securely locked, and hemmed in by carved columns and pilasters, the volumes have a certain decorative value, but hardly invite companionship nor suggest a second reading. It was the age of the cabinet, not of the book.

Chippendale thought more about the case than the

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contents. He made it oppressively structural, treating it as the architects of the day did chimney-pieces. The case or cabinet must have a pediment; the pediment must be supported by columns; the columns must, in turn, have supports. The ornament must be cast in a heavy vein and when finished the cabinet must become a part of the architectural composition of the room. If the owner did not possess enough books to fill the shelves, china could fill the vacancies. In fact many cabinets were made to contain both books and china.

The bookcase problem in Chippendale's hand was comparatively simple. He did not have to take into consideration the accommodation of hundreds of volumes, nor estimate bindings by the square foot. He regarded books from the ornamental standpoint and as convenient articles to balance china teacups and saucers.

Addison, writing as early as 1711, describes the library of a young lady:

"The very sound of a 'lady's library' gave me a great curiosity to see it; and as it was some time before the lady came to me, I had an opportunity of turning over a great many of her books, which were ranged together in very beautiful order. At the end of her folios (which were very finely bound

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and gilt) were great jars of china, placed one above another in a very noble piece of architecture. The quartos were separated from the octavos by a pile of smaller vessels, which rose in a delightful pyramid. The octavos were bounded by ten dishes of all shapes, colors and sizes, which were so disposed that they looked like one continued pillar indented with the finest strokes of sculpture, and stained with the greatest variety of dyes. That part of the library which was designed for the reception of plays and pamphlets and other loose papers, was enclosed in a kind of square consisting of one of the prettiest grotesque works that I ever saw, and made up of lions, monkeys, mandarins, trees, shells, and a thousand other odd figures in chinaware. In the midst of the room was a little Japan table with a quire of gilt paper upon it, and on the paper a silver snuff-box made in the shape of a little book. I found there were several counterfeit books upon the upper shelves, which were carved in wood, and served only to fill up the number."

The taste for combining fine bindings and rare china continued until 1750. Isaac Ware, Batty, Langley Kent, the latter a prominent exponent of architectural furniture, have much to say about the relation of books to china and both to wall treatments.





Cabinet of the Stuart period, showing the famous Charles II spiral legs

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It is interesting to note how the book-cabinet changed as the eighteenth century progressed. In time the china features were eliminated and by the late Georgian period, when Hepplewhite and Sheraton were busy with the bookcase theme, no provision was made for porcelain. But the bookcase as we know it was not yet evolved, that unarchitectural piece of furniture all books and glass with a narrow boundary of wood. The modern case meets the modern need far better than the book-cabinet or the book-desk, just as the gas range is an improvement over the brick oven when the mere utilitarian side of the matter is in question.

Yet it is quite probable that future generations will not collect our bookcases with any great enthusiasm, nor make distinctions between a mission or a golden oak finish. Bookcases by that time may be regarded as quite archaic. Shelves built flush with the walls will possibly be the library solution—a plan, by the way, which many architects greatly favor. This scheme is really an old one and may be seen in many French houses, and also in old English ones as well. In paneled rooms the sunken shelf is greatly to be desired, and no arrangement has yet been found which disposes so easily of a great number of books. There are many variations

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of the scheme—arched recesses filled with books, books arranged in panels, and books arranged in a continuous wainscot around a room.

The book-cabinet, the secretary and the desk are closely related to the cupboard. There is a personal charm about an old desk shared by few other things. What invisible letters the old pigeon holes contain! What ghosts of documents lie in the secret drawers!

What romances might be woven around unmailed letters and mislaid wills! Also what good modern work might be done, if inspiration could be drawn from all the old quill pens and ink horns! What evolutions in writing material the old desk suggests, and alas what retrogression in polite correspondence! How commonplace is "Yours truly" in comparison with "Your obedient servant"! Even "Faithfully yours" seems abrupt after "Yours to command."

Yet how beautifully does the old desk fit into modern surroundings! The olive green blotter with its hammered brass corners finds an excellent setting. The old and the new blend harmoniously.

If one could choose but one piece of old furniture, perhaps a desk should be the choice. An old sideboard makes a very strong appeal, but the difficulty here is that the sideboard quickly revolutionizes the entire dining-room. The later and more ordinary

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chairs and table are out-countenanced by the old Sheraton or Hepplewhite. The wallpaper usually has to go, followed, in time, by the rug. Not infrequently the fireplace is rebuilt.

The old desk, while mildly protesting against golden oak woodwork and mission furniture, has finer manners. It may stay for years among uncongenial surroundings without losing a whit of its dignity. It will be at all times a beautiful and useful piece of furniture. Once used it will never be replaced by a modern piece of furniture.

There are many types from which to choose. For beauty of line and proportion, the slant-top desks with block-fronts and ball-and-claw feet rank first. For rarity of design, the scroll-top secretaries should have first mention. Other good types, though less graceful, are the slant-tops with heavy ball-feet.

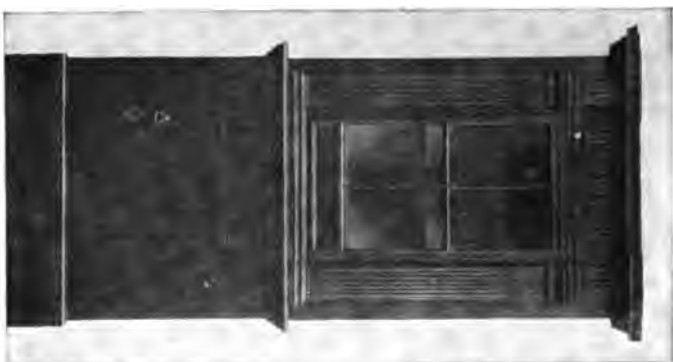
Like old chairs and tables the variety is extensive. If it were possible to collect desks in sequence, a museum would be needed to do justice to the subject. No private house could shelter the assortment. Most mortals are content with three or four, though not ungrateful for one. In choosing that one, if choice were possible, individual preference would largely determine the type. There are people who would prefer the oldest designs, irrespective of

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beauty; others would place beauty above age; a third group, possibly, would seek convenience first, although it may truthfully be said that most of the old desks are extremely convenient. They have sufficient breadth for ease in writing. They are the right height from the floor; the proportions in every particular seem to be excellent. Not all, however, are equally commodious. There is a wide range of choice when it comes to spaciousness.

If we turn to the seventeenth century, as represented in this country, we must be content with writing-boxes, known also as "Bible-boxes." These are a little larger than the desk-boxes of the nineteenth century, still preserved in many New England homes, beautifully made articles with compartments for ink, pens, pencils, paper, etc. Work-boxes of similar design and workmanship belong to the same period, our grandmothers', and consequently not very far away.

The early Bible-boxes, called thus because they often sheltered the family Bible, were of several styles—flat-top and slant-top, plain and carved. Some of the carving is very elaborate and corresponds in a general way to the decoration of presses and cupboards. These old boxes are very scarce now. Of desks of the eighteenth century many are



China cupboard, 1740



Sheraton china cabinet



Sheraton book cabinet

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in existence, although it is not always a simple matter to purchase one. A really fine specimen, old through and through, is extremely difficult to find. There are many combinations of cabinets and desks and, in England, what is known as a bureau-desk. The same piece of furniture is sometimes called a bureau-bookcase. In this country it would be called a secretary. A fine specimen made of finest San Domingo mahogany is shown in one of my chapters. It has the well-defined Chippendale characteristics and is a beautiful example of its kind. It has the broken cornice which followed the heavy, straight cornice of the early eighteenth century.

The next step in the treatment of the cornice is shown in the scroll-top desk with brass balls and cabriole legs, ending in flat feet. This fine piece of furniture belongs to the secretary class, as does the blocked-front desk with scroll-top and ball-and-claw feet. These two secretaries afford a most interesting comparison. The blocking is particularly fine in both cases, the ball-and-claw desk being perhaps a shade more graceful.

The desks of the eighteenth century may be divided into two general groups—low designs which followed the outlines of bureaus and chests of drawers; high designs which corresponded in a broad way

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to high chests of drawers, high-boys, cabinets, etc.

After 1740 the beautiful, straight cornice seen in high-boys, clocks, cupboards and secretaries was slowly replaced by the broken cornice or pediment, with its various subdivisions of scroll-top, swan-top, etc. In the same way the feet and legs of these pieces changed. The early cabriole-leg with flat foot was followed by the cabriole with ball-and-claw. Chippendale used in a masterly way on chairs and settees the cabriole in all its variations. On desks, cabinets, bookcases, etc., he used a different theme. Real Chippendale desks are uncommon in this country; in fact, difficult to find in England, where authentic pieces have always been in great demand.

During Queen Anne's reign many beautiful desks were made. They are in reality writing-cabinets, with shelves for books and space for china.

The late seventeenth century produced a number of writing-cabinets, intricate pieces of furniture serving many purposes. These may be divided into Charles II, James II, and William and Mary types. The first and second are usually of imported lacquer, in reality chests of lacquer elevated on high stands; the William and Mary pieces are usually of marquetry, sometimes of the Stuart design but more

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often of the style perfected during Anne's reign. The Stuart writing-cabinets, like those of the same date in Spain, are full of interesting surprises. Sometimes the front of the cabinet opens down, forming a shelf for writing, sometimes two doors swing back, revealing drawers and compartments. In the present revival of old lacquer these Stuart cabinets are in great demand. They are genuine Chinese lacquer, not the clever imitation which had such a great vogue in Chippendale's day.

The usual American household will hardly contain a rare Charles II writing-cabinet. Indeed, with the extreme devotion of most collectors in this country to everything labeled Chippendale and Sheraton, it is sometimes difficult to arouse any interest in the cabinet-work of the earlier century.

It is entirely true that Sheraton and Hepplewhite are not surpassed in beauty of workmanship nor in real fitness for the American house by any of these sumptuous things. Good taste has been an unconscious guide in selecting the later plainer styles.

Many are the interesting happenings relative to old desks. Not long ago, in Chicago, a city not given over entirely to romance, an old mahogany desk was purchased from a little second-hand shop on the North Side. Stowed away in one of the

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drawers were several old love letters, signed "Lydia H." They were written on large sheets, folded and sealed with wafers, and postmarked "twenty-five cents." They also were addressed in a delicate, brown Spencerian hand, but I do not wish to reveal too much of the story.

In another antique shop, of far greater pretensions in the same city, a deed of land signed by President Monroe was actually found hidden in a secret drawer of a tall Empire secretary. The dealer sold the secretary and deed together, and it is pleasant to note that, after the discovery, he did not change the dollar-mark on the white selling tag.

Of early nineteenth century desk-making many beautiful examples are in existence. They are simple types of French Empire, retaining the constructive features of the Napoleonic style, but showing little ornamental brass work except in finely wrought drawer-pulls and key-plates. Straight cornices are again seen, also traceried doors and rounded columns. These big articles are invariably of the secretary type. The grace of the eighteenth century has departed, but something sturdy and fine is represented.

The desk theme might be continued through the black walnut era, when the green baize writing-lid,

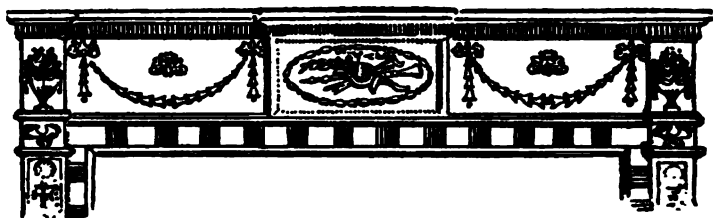


Vacant, yet eloquent with possibilities

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supported by the top drawer, was a familiar feature. Also there might be a sentence or two in regard to Eastlake and kindred styles. But these are not the desks which we seek to-day, and a passing word is all sufficient.





CHAPTER XIII

CHAIRS AND THEIR ANCESTRY

SO much is said about the importance of chair legs from the viewpoint of design, that we are apt to overlook the value of backs, braces, arms and other portions of chair anatomy; yet these members are quite as valuable in pointing out the period and the country. Chair backs are particularly interesting, for they show an endless variety and often a development quite independent from the rest of the framework. When legs were extremely plain, backs were sometimes highly ornamented; when backs were plain, legs were occasionally very elaborate. In looking at certain chairs of the early seventeenth century, or at illustrations, we often have the feeling that the wrong upper portions have been combined with the right lower portions or *vice versa*; as if the various parts had in some way be-

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come mixed and that the designers were not entirely to blame. Other old chairs charm by their unity. If massive in one part, there is a general massiveness about the whole design; if light and graceful in the back, the arms, braces and legs are equally so; if carved in one place, there is sufficient carving elsewhere to balance the design.

Many of the oldest chairs in museums and private collections are so fine that it is hard not to be over-enthusiastic. We have to remember that chairs, and good ones, are still being made, and that fine workmanship has never been confined to one country or century.

To many people the chairs of Chippendale and his contemporaries represent the high-water mark in designing; others prefer the work of English chair-makers of the seventeenth century, while to another group the chairs of the Italian Renaissance or of the great Louis periods make the greatest appeal. To a few people early Gothic specimens are the perfection of chair-designing. Fortunately there are enough styles to suit all tastes, and a chair collection can be made as varied as time and money will permit.

There are certain types of old chairs less known than others, which to a certain extent have escaped the camera. Some of these are of English make of

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the sixteenth century. They are not of the kind to appeal to modern furniture-makers. They would not reproduce well, nor could they be adapted or remodeled. They are interesting as designs, and are of value only in the original.

One very early type of the turned variety belongs to this class. It is sometimes called "Henry VIII," so early does it point a mark in English designing. Its triangular seat, three heavy legs and unique back belong to a period more vigorous than refined. Its sturdy oak frame shows no sign of decay, and to-day, at the end of four centuries, looks fully equal to several more. Its color is almost black—real black oak in fact, which no modern stain quite approaches. This chair is interesting for many reasons. In the first place it is so much heavier than is necessary. No thought of forest conservation troubled the maker. He was lavish with his material, using timber enough for half-a-dozen chairs, possibly a baker's dozen, as modern methods go. The big rounded legs would provide excellent pillars; the turned spindle back would make a nineteenth century bedstead; the underbraces would go a long way toward building a cottage. The maker was a builder rather than a designer, but he built well. Massive as it is in construction, it followed



Spindle-back chair, 1670



Charles II spiral chair



Wainscot chair

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closely upon the folding stool, which was used so long in England and on the Continent. The stool was as light as the turned chair was heavy, and no two articles could present a greater contrast. Stools and benches formed the seats of the Middle Ages. When the first real chairs were made they were so cumbersome as to be permanent fitments of a room. Made with high backs to shut out the wind and with great canopies to keep out the rain they were not easily moved. Once in place they staid, until a century or so later, when another style came into existence.

Gothic chairs in their various guises are extremely interesting, but seldom drift into private collections. Their beauty, particularly when of French and Italian origin, needs little emphasis. First came plain frames and simple Gothic carving; the succeeding type was more elaborate with intricate tracery and a frame conforming to Gothic outlines; the next, more architectural in character with complicated ornament and a back following the lines of the Gothic arch; and the final style very florid in decoration and not nearly so fine from a constructive standpoint. The backs of the first and second types were square; of the last two, pointed; all were solid. The turned chairs were among the earliest to show an open back,

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and for this reason make and mark a departure in furniture designing. Daylight could be seen through the back, not much, perhaps, in the earliest examples, but more and more, as grace and delicacy became features in furniture-making.

A few folding stools of the fifteenth century, as depicted in old missals, have slat backs, but they do not antedate the first turned chairs. The origin of the latter is now believed to be English. Flemish and Dutch claims are no longer considered. There are not many of the triangular variety in America. The famous "Harvard chair" is one.

Following closely on the turned type and for a period contemporary with it, was the wainscot chair, made of oak, as its name indicates, and fearfully and wonderfully massive. It was as solid as the old canopy chair, and neither daylight, wind nor rain could penetrate its high, thick back. In many ways it was a step backward in furniture-making. The workmanship was of a high order, but the design was very unwieldy and with few exceptions remained so until furniture designers of the mid-Jacobean period remodeled it on more graceful lines. The later wainscot chairs were among the best things of their day and paved the way for the fine Jacobean styles of leather and cane.

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In the wainscot, illustrated, is the flower *motif* which is often seen in seventeenth century ornament—a conventionalized sunflower which bloomed persistently in wood-carving for a full quarter century. It is found on the chair backs of the day, on chests, cupboards and presses; nor did it belong exclusively to English handiwork.

As a contrast to the wainscot is another chair of the turned variety, but separated from the first turned type by a hundred and fifty years, and showing a grace and charm several centuries in advance of the heavy three-cornered specimens. The back of the chair is open and of different dimensions from that of the wainscots. It is well separated from the seat. It is a high, but not a long back, and marks a different day in designing. The spiral arms, legs and braces, and the spiral borders of the plain surfaces are very characteristic of the Charles II period. In the attention paid to other Charles II types, this beautiful chair has been neglected. A characteristic specimen is illustrated.

During this significant century in furniture designing, the seventeenth, Spanish influence had an important bearing on chair-making. There were two Spanish types which found their way to England, and were quickly seized by English designers,

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adapted, remodeled and Anglicized. One style with its high narrow back incased in leather, carved underbraces and slender, hoofed feet, needs no special tribute now, but the other does, particularly as it furnished a model for many craftsmen in our own country. This second type had a leather back wider than it was long. Like the turned chair of the Stuart period, it had a high but not a long back. It was sometimes ornamented with large nail heads in the true Spanish manner, and was always strongly braced, but in a more graceful way than was common with English workmanship. In the sixteenth century this chair was in common use in Spain. Many of these specimens are in museum collections. The backs are of decorated leather and are fine examples of early upholstery as well as furniture-making.

During the latter part of the seventeenth century, chair backs in England assumed lighter and more graceful forms. Old designs were given a new character by an intermingling of outside influences. Flemish, Spanish and Dutch *motifs* each in turn gave something to the English furniture-maker, and to his credit it must be said that he worked wisely. The Anglo-Flemish,⁴ Anglo-Spanish and Anglo-Dutch furniture takes high rank among the





Modern house constructed and furnished after the manner of the seventeenth century

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handicraft of this splendid century of designing.

Early Flemish chairs and those of a later and English day are almost entirely of cane and yet the wood, what there is of it, is treated in such a masterly way as to make the frames alone of considerable value. Occasionally old frames are found minus the cane; again the backs will be intact, and the seats covered with leather, tapestry or old "Turkey work." One development of the cane chair, usually of Continental origin, was made with an upholstered seat, but this style differs from the "all cane" chairs repaired with upholstery.

During Charles II's reign, cane furniture was very popular in England. To-day these pieces are usually called Jacobean, and for general use the name fits well enough. Purists, who would limit the adjective "Jacobean" to the reigns of James I and Charles I, are seldom collectors, or it might be said collectors are seldom purists. Anyway, many excellent authorities use "Stuart" and Jacobean interchangeably, and, if so, the seventeenth century is pretty well covered. These charming chairs of Flemish extraction, call them "Jacobean," "Stuart" or just plain "seventeenth century," which admits of no dispute, these are well worth owning. The wood has aged to the color of teak, and in many cases the cane

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is almost as dark. The carving, what there is of it, is the best the day afforded, and that day, in this particular, has never been surpassed. The early Flemish type shows more wood than the later English one. The back has a board splat of cane with uprights of simple carving, the seat is as solidly caned as is consistent with the strength of the chair. The feet terminate in an outward scroll. There is a carved underbrace and sometimes an X stretcher, though seldom both. Where both are seen, it is a composite chair.

At the time that Flemish furniture-makers were evolving this famous design, Spanish craftsmen were producing a leather chair, which later had a great influence on cane designing, particularly in England. This equally famous type had slender hoof feet, a high comparatively narrow back and carved or turned under-braces. In England, and to a certain extent on the Continent, the characteristics of these two chairs were blended. The hoof-foot was used in preference to the scroll-foot, and the high, narrow back, without the splat, was adopted by reason of its greater simplicity. The cane chair of James II's reign was a graceful blending of the best of the two designs. The feet were Spanish, though straighter than the original Spanish "hoof," the back

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had no splat, and the beautiful cane-work extended over the entire surface, incased in as narrow a frame of wood as was practicable with durability.

Our interest in the eighteenth century, or possibly our greater knowledge, has blinded us to the claims of the seventeenth. To understand the achievements of "the golden age of furniture-making," it is necessary to study the work of the earlier period. It forms an interesting and most instructive preface.

In the spindle-back chairs of 1670 we see where the furniture-makers of 1730 found suggestions for their slat-back chairs. In the first clumsy designs with Dutch cabriole-legs we trace Chippendale's early inspiration, and in the Flemish and Spanish adaptations we find the foundation for the fine chairs of Queen Anne's time. Other and earlier types may be mentioned as giving marked assistance to the designers of the early eighteenth century. Important among these pieces are the triangular turned chairs mentioned. Their relationship may be traced to the early "roundabouts," a design destined to become famous under Chippendale's remodeling.

A point worthy of note in all the chair-making of the late seventeenth century is that, aside from spindle-backs, the upper portions of all side

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chairs were rather solid. Open spaces were left, but they were narrow in comparison with the splats.

In the real Queen Anne the splat joins the seat, the top of the back is without carving, and the seat rests on the cabriole. This type is well known and needs neither illustration nor description. While it has never been reproduced so extensively as later designs, it has been for years on the market in limited numbers, and may be secured in the original by those who are willing to give time to the search. It is not to be bought for a song, unless so out of repair that the restoring is a matter of considerable outlay. If the rush seat has to be replaced both time and money will be needed, but the "done over" chair will be a source of satisfaction. Some pieces of furniture are disappointing after they have been put together bit by bit after the manner of Cleopatra Skewton, but not so with the good Queen Annes. To many people they are more interesting than the chairs that followed, though less famous. They are splendidly adapted for dining-rooms having proportions which make them especially comfortable for that purpose. Combined with the correct table which is *not* an American Empire, they are wonderfully attractive. A gateleg table of the type used in the early eighteenth century is a good one to com-



Early Chippendale sofa, shell knee, ball-and-claw feet, needlework upholstery

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bine with Queen Anne chairs. This table is of lighter build than the heavy oak gatelegs of the seventeenth century.

Contemporary work in France needs a passing word. Chair backs in the early part of the reign of the Grand Monarch were usually square. Toward the end of his long sovereignty they were curved. The rectangular back is typical of Louis XIII chairs, and may be traced to an earlier date in France.

The beauty and delicacy of French ornament is seen to great advantage in chair backs of the seventeenth century. Renaissance themes in all their phases may be studied here, from the first flat carving of the time of Francis I through the Louis periods, which were in reality an outgrowth of the great classic revival. The shell in its various forms, and the acanthus leaf are found in the gilded frames of the arm and side chairs. The development of the acanthus leaf alone affords endless opportunities of study.

Turning back to England, which is extremely fascinating at the time of Queen Anne's reign, so far as handicraft is concerned, we find a transition, brief but important. Not alone in furniture-making, but in all lines of interior work, a preparation for the

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work of the Georgian period was taking place.

"Georgian," once a term of contempt, has long been a synonym for architectural beauty. Now we apply it to furniture, silver, chintz, candlesticks and door-knobs. It has as wide a significance as "Jacobean" and in no way does it suggest the obstinacy of George III, nor the extravagance of George IV. If, a hundred and fifty years ago, its meaning were largely political, it has lost that association now. Together with Jacobean, it has taken on a different and far more interesting meaning.

When we call a teapot "Georgian," we are undisturbed by any thought of Whig, Hanover or Brunswick partisanship, possibly unconscious that there ever was such a thing. It does n't make much difference now—the teapot being a good one. If George I, it is an outgrowth of a Queen Anne pattern, with possibly an edge in "nurl" or "gadroon" design; if George II, it probably has spiral fluting, and if George III, delicate chasing and ornamental borders all together a charming bit in silver.

The long Georgian period, covering as it did the reigns of four sovereigns, represents a variety of styles, and shows an interesting blending and merging of many types. In furniture, as in silver, there is little resemblance between the early and late stages.

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The first followed closely on Queen Anne traditions, which in themselves were founded on William and Mary *motifs*; the last embodied the final days of the great age of cabinet-making, so soon to be lost in the mazes of the French Empire.

Naturally the work of Chippendale, Hepplewhite, Sheraton and Shearer, comes within this cycle, also that of many lesser lights. The typical furniture of these men is so well known as to need little comment. It is too individual, too vigorous, to be summed up under the name "Georgian." It deserves to be known by the men, whose genius brought it into existence, and it is but fair to say that it usually is. There are, however, many pieces in existence which are more complex than the characteristic examples with which we are familiar. They are more elaborate than those of the usual American collections; they are seldom of the class illustrated in our furniture books and magazines. Made to order for noble families, or members of the royal family, they have seldom been photographed except for private distribution. Quite outside the really typical specimens, they might be termed "Georgian" without robbing the great cabinet-makers of any of their laurels, or doing injustice to lesser designers.

We may prefer to furnish our houses with plainer

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pieces, choosing in preference the simplest Chippendale, Hepplewhite and Sheraton, but we can sincerely admire the workmanship of more ornate pieces, particularly when they form such important studies in design. Particularly interesting were some of Chippendale's early chairs in walnut. They represented him in a vein comparatively little known, probably soon abandoned for something more unified. Queen Anne's influence was marked here, also a lingering William and Mary feeling in the framework. Chippendale walnut does not often drift this way and is not easy to find in England. It did not suit Chippendale's methods of work as well as did mahogany, and he was glad to discard it in favor of the newer wood.

The upholstered settee of mahogany is also of Chippendale's first period, though a bit later than his work in walnut. It shows a blending of old and new ideas. The straight, high back is rather William and Mary, but the shell-knee and the claw-feet are quite in Chippendale's own manner. The upholstery is of a unique pattern, in colors still wonderfully attractive. No mere picture can give the harmony of the soft purples and faded greens with the warm brown of the mahogany. The wood has the tone which comes from long exposure to light



Chippendale chairs, pierced splats, claw feet, 1740



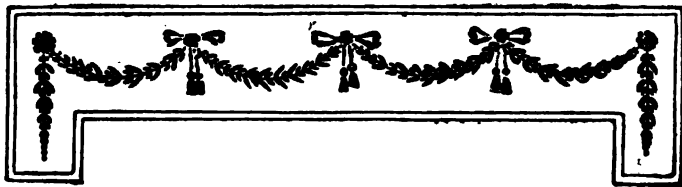
Settee, corresponding to chairs, a style difficult now to secure

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and air, a tone known to collectors as "sun-bleached." Time alone gives this color and texture, and it is one reason why new mahogany fails to charm.

The great middle section of the long Georgian period contains the later work of Chippendale, many of the achievements of Robert and James Adam, and the early work of Shearer, Hepplewhite and Sheraton. To say, therefore, that a house is furnished in the Georgian manner is definite as to century, but vague as to the actual style. The range is an extensive one, beginning with walnut and ending with satinwood, and including within its boundaries the finest work in mahogany.





CHAPTER XIV

CONCERNING EARLY UPHOLSTERY

LONG standing and hard sitting must have been the fate of the people of the Middle Ages. In the early days, when the chest was the principal piece of furniture, those who remained at home must have had a tedious time. But in the Dark Ages, called thus, as someone has suggested, because we are so in the dark about them, a quiet home life was perhaps not desired. We picture this period as one of constant defense and warfare, of such storm and stress that a chest and a few stools, with a possible bench, would be quite sufficient for the needs of a large family, and, as we have no definite information to the contrary, the impression will probably remain until the end of time.

Old illuminations are helpful in throwing light on a later period, and supply us with picturesque details of coronation scenes, christenings and weddings.

CONCERNING EARLY UPHOLSTERY

But as these are chiefly of royal happenings there is little hint of the life of the common people.

Skins of wild beasts, doubtless, formed the first upholstery, also the earliest rugs. Crude embroideries helped out in the beauty and comfort of interiors, and when the crusades opened up an intercourse between Europe and the Holy Land, there were Oriental cushions and carpets to add to the list of household belongings.

Eleanor of Provence, Queen of Henry III, is credited with many French innovations, which added to comfortable living. Paneling is said to have been introduced during her reign at Windsor Castle; also Flemish hangings. Edward I married Eleanor of Castile and thus Spanish things found their way to England. Cordovan leather is mentioned in an inventory of the royal household of this date—also Persian and Moorish carpets and hanging lamps. Ozier, or rush, mats were used at table as chair cushions, and while they could not have been particularly comfortable, must rank as examples of early upholstery.

Inasmuch as needlecraft was one of the earliest arts in England, antedating the Norman Conquest, it is probable that the first adornments of wall and furniture were of home make. The famous Bayeux

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tapestry, depicting William's departure from Normandy, his triumphal entry into England, the battle of Hastings and kindred events, is the most famous piece of needlework of its day. It has long been credited to the needle of Queen Matilda and her ladies, but modern authorities, who often have an unpleasant way of upsetting historic traditions, have placed it at a slightly later date. Technically it is not tapestry at all but embroidery of a most primitive kind. While needlework of this type was used primarily to decorate walls, rather than to soften the outlines of chairs and benches, there are many records of "embroideries" and "tapestries" being used over backs of chairs and for cushions and foot stools. "Tapestries" they are usually called, but, as with the case of the famous Bayeux handiwork, they are made on an embroidery frame, not on a loom. This mixing up of terms has led to much confusion, and has been the cause of many discussions as to the precise date of true tapestry making. Both the mediæval tapestry and the embroidery tell a story. It is this "story" quality which makes them somewhat alike and has made the confusion. The history of tapestry may be read in many books, and of late old embroideries have received a greater share of attention.



Settee of walnut, upholstered in needlework, Charles II period



Detail of Stuart needlework, Charles II and his queen, Catherine of Braganza

CONCERNING EARLY UPHOLSTERY

By the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the fame of English embroidery was widespread. Catherine of Arragon was a royal patron of the needle, devoting many hours to the embroidery frame and giving a great impetus to all needlecraft.

This unfortunate Queen, so Lady Marion Alford tells us, introduced the Spanish taste in embroidery, which was then white or black silk and gold "lace stitches" on fine linen. "Spanish work," as it was called, continued in fashion under Mary, Catherine's daughter, who was doubly Spanish in her sympathies. She had her needle constantly in her hand, and when Wolsey and Campeggio paid to her their formal visit, she came forth to them with a skein of red silk about her neck. Her work, as well as that of her mother, is specially commemorated by Taylor, the poet of the Thames and of the needle. "Certaine Sonnets in the Hon. Memory of Queenes and great ladies who have bin famous for the rare invention and practise with the Needle," from the second part of his book: "The Needle's Excellency, a new booke wherein are divers admirable workes wrought with the Needle—newly invented and cut in copper for the pleasure and profit of the industrious" (London: 12th edition, 1640).

Cushions, so Thomas Wright relates, were kept

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in the hall for the seats of the principal people in the household. The furniture of the hall of William Lawson of Newcastle-on-the-Tyne, in 1551, consisted of one table of oak valued at five shillings, two double counters valued at five shillings, two cushions, five shillings, five other cushions, valued at twelve shillings, two carpet cloths, and a cupboard cloth valued together at ten shillings, and the hangings of the hall, estimated to be worth fifty shillings. This list, according to Thomas Wight, shows the said Lawson to be worth considerable property.

The hall of Robert Goodchild, parish clerk of St. Andrews in Newcastle, in 1557, contained less in the way of cushions, having but six old ones, which, together with two table cloths, were valued at two shillings and eighteen pence. There were, however, a number of things not found in the Lawson house, namely, an almyer or cupboard, five basins, six lavers, seventeen pewter doblers—whatever they were—six pewter dishes, six pewter saucers, four pottle pots, three pint pots, and three quart pots, ten candlesticks, a mortar and pestle, and three old chairs. The value attached to these articles is amusing; the three old chairs are valued at eighteen pence, the six pewter dishes, which include a hand basin, are placed

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at five shillings, while the “doblers” in a lump amount to seventeen shillings. Jane Lawson, kin to William, was a person of wealth. Her hall was well provided with cushions, carpet cloths, hangings, tapestries—also a wainscot table, a table dormat, a dresser and two cupboards. Mr. Wright finds the halls of this period well furnished with hangings of tapestry which served three purposes—to decorate the walls, to keep out draughts and to “conceal people—if necessary.”

The belongings of Bertram Anderson, alderman and merchant of Newcastle, included, according to this most useful recorder of manners and furniture, many cushions of tapestry and “carpet work.” Six were green and the others were of divers colors, two richly embroidered with gold. Thomas Liddell’s inventory is in his own handwriting and sets forth “sex guyshons of tapestry, a cow board, sex guyshons of Turkey cloths,” and so on with “chayrs of wainscot, a louckinge glass and fyve buffatt stules.” As Thomas Liddell was a parish clerk his spelling is probably of his time rather than his own.

Flanders during this century—the sixteenth—provided England with many articles, including “Flanders cloth” velvets and embroideries. In comparing old English documents, such as wills and in-

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ventories, with those of Continental origin, a great difference is found in all the small comforts of life. France and Italy seem at least a century in advance of England. While the people of the middle class in such a town as Newcastle were living in the manner indicated by the household items given, houses in France were fairly well furnished. While William Lawson and his sister Jane, and Bertram Anderson were moving their green and tapestry cushions from chair to chair, their contemporaries across the Channel were comfortably sitting on upholstered seats.

As early as the reign of Henri IV there was a distinction made in France between furniture-makers and furniture upholsterers. The chairs and sofas of that time are marvels in comparison with the wainscot types of Elizabethan origin. The materials used include French, Flemish and Italian textiles, and show a wide range of design. Most of the chairs of Elizabeth's reign were of the heavy wainscot type. Without some softening influence in the way of cushions they must have been extremely uncomfortable. Pads of Spanish leather, perhaps, added color to their hard outline, and made sitting less a penance. It would be interesting to know. Elizabeth liked her comfort and probably



Needlework upholstery, Charles II period



Louis XIV tapestry

Louis XIV velvet

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had it—with chairs as well as other things.

It is necessary to skip almost a century in order to find chairs and settles of English make with their upholstered seats and backs in place. When imported leathers came into general use in England, upholstery in its more modern meaning came into existence. By the middle of the seventeenth century, both leather and woven stuffs were employed in the making of furniture, and there are enough examples in existence to show how skilfully these materials were used. Many of the chairs of this Jacobean century are upholstered only in the seats, others only in the back, while a third class comprises the interesting high back chairs of walnut, mostly wood yet showing a narrow panel of upholstery in the back and a well made, covered seat usually finished with fringe.

In comparing English furniture of the seventeenth century with that of French design of the corresponding period, a great difference in workmanship will be noted. Not alone in the treatment of the wood, but in all the details which make for grace and comfort, French designers were far ahead. It is interesting to trace outside influences and to see how they shaped and developed the work of English furniture makers. Sometimes the British crafts-

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man was very Flemish, sometimes quite Dutch, occasionally extremely French, and, at rare intervals, plain English. Yet if we look carefully into the designs which seem entirely English, foreign touches will be found here and there, but so slight as to be scarcely noticeable.

Elizabeth's reign appears on the surface to be wholly British, and, so far as furniture is concerned, it is far more so than either the preceding or the succeeding period—yet Flemish influence lurks in the corners of the great court and livery cupboards, and is tucked away in many of the chairs. As has been said before, Elizabeth was extremely fortunate in much of the handicraft associated with her name. It is sturdy and vigorous, and if lacking in refinement more than makes up by a certain rude simplicity, which at this day greatly pleases us.

Judged by modern standards, most of this furniture must have been very uncomfortable. We wonder, in looking at the great cupboards and presses, the massive bedsteads and huge chairs, how people managed to be comfortable, even in the most primitive meaning of the word. The big wainscot chairs, unadorned by upholstery of any kind, and so high in the seat as to suggest real discomfort, do not invite close companionship. The cushions and pads

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which made these unwieldy articles endurable have not been preserved, and time has also made away with the footstools which were once an accompaniment of every chair. Likewise, the benches or "forms," which in many households were the only seats, have for the most part met oblivion. If people of means could afford the big wainscot chairs, they could, of course, also afford the necessary accessories to make them comfortable, and first on the list were the cushions and pads of leather, of embroidery and other costly stuffs. These cushions continued to be used through the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, until upholstery, in the modern sense, was quite universal. By that time a new era was at hand in household comfort.

When the upholstered chair became a real English product, furniture-making had passed through its heavy, massive stages and was approaching the graceful lines of the eighteenth century.

Spain and France had long known the upholstered chair, and both countries had much to teach English craftsmen, who seem to have been extremely slow in learning the simplest lessons in these matters. Spanish chair-makers were using leather with great skill in the sixteenth century—not in the form of cushions, but as a permanent part of the framework.

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Leather was one of Spain's great products. The completeness with which her craftsmen handled it shows how fully they grasped its possibilities. Spanish designers were turning out beautiful work when English chair makers were clinging to their heavy designs in wood, and even before the French had much to their credit in this line.

The seventeenth century in England is a very fascinating one to the lover of furniture. Elizabeth's declining years began the century. Under James I there were few changes; under Charles I there were many. With this turbulent reign we have the mid-Jacobean period; the true Jacobean if we call Charles II handicraft Stuart, and limit the adjective Jacobean to James I and Charles I. With Cromwell's supremacy there was a halt in all the arts, and when royalty again came into power a great leap in handicraft took place.

The Cromwellian period cannot be ignored. It produced a few admirable things, and had conditions been more favorable, there would probably have been a steady advance in design.

The corresponding years in France were ones of great artistic activity. Louis XIV was in the heyday of his powers, and his influence was felt in all lines—in the lace industries, in the porcelain works

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at St. Cloud, and especially in furniture-making. This was the time of André Charles Boulle and his marvelous designing, and of the beginning of many furniture guilds and organizations. La Brun was directing the Gobelin factory, and Colbert, the King's able minister of finance, was fostering the smallest industry, so that the coffers of France should be enriched as much as possible. Flanders, Belgium and Italy had long profited by commercial intercourse with France, but so successful was this fostering of home products that thousands were saved for the King's coffers. And in proportion that France gained other countries lost. Especially did the tapestry makers of Flanders and Belgium lose under Colbert's management. Genoa velvets, Venetian brocades, and other sumptuous Italian stuffs lost favor. Bouvais, Aubusson, and Gobelin weaves replaced them. Yet the upholstery on the beautiful armchair of the Louis XIV period is very Italian looking. It is certainly Italian in design. A greater contrast could hardly be found than between this fine piece of furniture and a Cromwellian chair. The luxury-loving Louis and the iron Protector are not more unlike. Indeed, the chairs seem to be a perfect reflection of the two men. It is a pity that both cannot be shown, for they make a

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most interesting comparison. But it is far easier to find French examples of this date than English. A great deal of English furniture of this period was destroyed. In fact, there are a dozen pieces of furniture of Charles II's reign in existence to one of Cromwell's time.

Charles came to his throne with the memory of Louis XIV's court indelibly stamped on his mind. Its luxury, its beauty, its extravagance were soon to be reproduced in miniature. Handicraft in all lines received a decidedly French impress. Even the gardens of England were remodeled to conform to La Nôte's wonderful landscape effects at Versailles. Unique, but hardly in tune with English traditions, English climate, or English characteristics were these foreign schemes, and they did not long survive. Dutch ideas of gardening soon played havoc with French schemes, and they, in turn, were soon demolished by the "naturalistic" movement of the early eighteenth century led by that notorious royal gardener, "Capability" Brown, surnamed "Calamity" by a later generation.

If French *motifs* in gardening were decidedly alien on British soil, working more or less for ruin, the same cannot be said of French *motifs* in furniture. By far the most attractive, most livable, most lika-

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ble of all the furniture designated "Stuart" belongs to the Charles II period.

Other influences besides French were at work. Flemish feeling is very strong in the fine cane-work of the day, and Spanish in the framework of many of the chairs. The famous tall side chair, with back and seat of cane, belongs to Charles II's time, and is one of its best possessions. Both Flemish and Spanish influences are found here. Other cane designs, notably those with spiral supports and straight backs, are among the good things labeled "Charles II."

Cane chairs in England were without pads or cushions of any kind, and were doubtless entirely comfortable. But it is interesting to note that contemporary French chairs of cane usually have a cushion of brocade or tapestry, bound with silk or gold cord and finished with tassels. Such cushions are seen in Versailles, Blois, and Fontainebleau. These too, belong to Louis XIV's day, as the Grand Monarch lived through the reigns of several of the Stuart sovereigns. William and Mary and Anne also came and went before he laid aside his sceptre. The Louis XIV style is, therefore, very varied, and there is little resemblance between the early and late phases. Louis' long rule, encompassing as it did

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so many English reigns, had its counterpart in Elizabeth's long sovereignty, which embraced several French periods.

The furniture-makers of France, during the late Louis XV and Louis XVI periods, were marvelous upholsterers, just as they were wonderful workers in marquetry and ormolu. For real grace and charm in the way of treatment of covered sofas and chairs English workmen could not compete.

The upholstering alone of French furniture of the eighteenth century is worthy a chapter by itself. In its technical perfection, beauty of color and design, it stands alone. The men who worked under Louis XIV and Louis XV, and during the brief period of the Regency, were artists in wood and metal, and their names are worthy to rank with the painters of that day. It is not to be wondered at that they used brocades, velvets, and tapestries in a way which the English craftsmen could not imitate. Yet the love of English furniture is so deeply rooted in the American breast that we seldom feel the same interest in French examples.

When Louis XIV yielded to a more powerful ruler, George I had been one year on the English throne. Therefore, the brief Queen Anne period is contemporary with the last portion of the great Louis



Ladder-back Chippendale



Ladder-back Chippendale



Hepplewhite



Chippendale



Queen Anne

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period. Two French chairs are shown of this important epoch—the first decade of the eighteenth century. The tapestry chair is entirely different from the big carved chair upholstered in figured velvet. Yet both belong to Louis' reign; that of later date shows the approaching curves of the Regency and of the Louis XV style. How the curve was interpreted in England is splendidly shown in the Queen Anne type, which is almost identical with Chippendale's early work. In this case it is the real cabriole, or bandy-leg, introduced into England by the Dutch, and forming, with the ball- and claw-foot, Holland's most important contribution to English furniture-making. It was Chippendale who gave it lasting fame, and it is to him that most of the honor belongs.

From this time on, in England, the chair with the upholstered back went rapidly out of fashion, except in the great high-back, arm affairs, such as "Wings" and kindred patterns. Chippendale and the later cabinet-makers gave distinction to this type, and American furniture-makers were also successful in treating its huge proportions. But the seventeenth century type of upholstered side chair found little favor with Georgian designers—though it lingered during Anne's dozen years of

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power. Dutch *motifs* persisted until about 1740, but by that date they could hardly be recognized as "William and Mary." The vigorous rendering which the bandy-leg, the ball- and claw-foot, the shell-knee, and the fiddle-back received from designers of the early eighteenth century is too well known for emphasis here. It is when a chair like the late Louis XIV one is examined that the beauty of contemporaneous work in England is appreciated—just as the greater charm of French designing is felt when an English chair of the mid-seventeenth century is held up for comparison.

Thus each country had periods when it excelled the other. French influence in England waxed and waned, sometimes improving, sometimes marring. With Chippendale and Sheraton it was, at best, a doubtful benefit, except when the Louis XVI style took a firm hold on Sheraton. When he followed the Empire style, in the later years of his life, he lost his exquisite simplicity and did his least worthy designing. Likewise, when Chippendale adopted his Louis XV manner, his work declined in strength and beauty. But during the seventeenth century the influence of both French and Flemish craftsmen was very helpful, and so it was with Spanish schemes which usually reached England by way of France.

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Charles II's queen was Catherine of Braganza, and it is possible that the mingling of Spanish and Flemish *motifs* seen in so much of the cane-work of his reign may be indirectly due to her. The relations between Flanders and Spain were very close at this time, and many Spanish things are very Flemish, and many Flemish things quite Spanish. This infusion in English designs gave a certain lightness and grace which are not found in the earlier handicraft of the century. From the time, however, of Henriette Marie's coming to England, as the Queen of Charles I, furniture gradually lost its cumbersome proportions. It did not approach the grace of Charles II's time; it had none of the diversity which marked most of the William and Mary output—very large, considering the brevity of the reign—but it had a certain something which placed it above the work of the men who labored under James I and his great predecessor, Elizabeth. VanDyck's long visit to England is credited with being very helpful in adding certain refinements to English life. His relation to the royal family was similar to that of Holbein in Henry VIII's reign, an interesting and picturesque association in both cases. However this may be, a comparison of James I and Charles I furniture shows a decided advancement

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in favor of the latter. Many Elizabethan and early Tudor *motifs* persisted, particularly in cupboards, presses, bedsteads, and other large household articles. Chairs of all times responded to changes in design very quickly and with less of that perpetual overlapping of styles.

Fringe seems to have been immensely popular with Continental upholsterers, and fairly so in England. The chairs of the Louis XIII period and early Louis XIV are liberally fringed, which added considerably to the cost. But fringe went out with the seventeenth century, and it was a long time before it came back again. Victorian furniture makers had a great liking for it, and most of the pseudo-Gothic chairs are fringed to the Queen's taste.

James II chairs were somewhat fringy; high, narrow backs, with a border of carved woodwork around a long upholstered panel; an upholstered seat outlined with fringe; a curved X brace connecting four rather slender legs. The James II period has scarcely had its share in the annals of seventeenth century furniture-making. James' short reign, sandwiched in between that of Charles II and that of William and Mary, usually gets scant mention. Yet it was responsible for beautiful cane-work and several interesting types of furniture. It has been over-

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shadowed by the interesting and very important Charles II period and by the extremely picturesque and varied William and Mary epoch. James, it will be remembered, married Mary of Modena. A good deal of the upholstery of his reign has a decided Italian effect.

For sheer brilliancy of color few things in upholstery equal the English needlework of the late seventeenth century. Just at present it is much in demand, and the smallest pieces are priced far beyond the average purse. Yet several fortunate people own whole sets of furniture upholstered in this quaint stitchery. "Tapestry embroidery" it was called in the old days and this is more descriptive than "needlework," which includes many types. Not only striking in color and design, but valuable as records of costumes are all the old needle pictures. The Stuart period particularly is most picturesquely set forth in much of this handicraft.

Charles II was a special favorite with needle women. He is found on many specimens and in countless guises. Were no other portraits at hand we would have a fairly accurate idea of his appearance; and as for his costumes, hats, and wigs the tapestry pictures are very illuminating.

"Stump-work" has also perpetuated the face and

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figure of this monarch in countless ways. The collecting of "stump" has never been an American hobby. The opportunities are limited in this country for one thing; then old needlework in its various forms has never appealed with great fascination to us. China and furniture have always seemed so much more worth while. It is now possible to combine furniture and needlework in a delightful way, as evidenced by the recent revival of seventeenth century furniture upholstered in cross-stitch, for cross-stitch it is, though so solid in appearance as to have little connection with the familiar cross-stitching of modern embroidery.

Stump-work is of a different variety. Portions of the picture are in relief, being filled or padded in a way peculiar to the Stuart period. It was from the first quite a different type from the needlework of our illustrations. Small objects, like boxes, book-covers and hand-screens were ornamented in this unique handiwork, and to-day there are enough articles to be secured through the large importing shops to form a moderate collection, but to order antiques in this manner would be to lose much of the real zest. Part of the joy of collecting lies in finding things in unexpected places; the very thing most wanted in the least expected corner. To sit

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down and deliberately plan to buy old stump or any other Jacobean object would be too cut and dried for the American mind. In the same way old needlework pictures must come to the collector, but once having come, it is quite possible that an active hobby might be inaugurated. Such rare specimens as the ones illustrated are hardly to be encountered, yet it is amazing what beautiful specimens are to be found in the shops which make a specialty of rare old furnishings.

William III brought many comforts to England, including deep-seated chairs with arms and well proportioned backs, and great sofas, padded in a most modern manner. The upholstered sofa seems to have been an exotic in England up to that time, but thereafter it appears in numbers, usually accompanying an arm and several side chairs. In the recent fad for William and Mary things, a few of these old sofas and chairs have been brought to light. Many fine reproductions recently designed in this country make it possible to give a room a decided William and Mary character. So well are the pieces designed and executed that even the upholstery is of the correct pattern and forms not the least interesting feature. Cupboards of marquetry, and tables of many legs, also lacquered screens, would

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heighten the late seventeenth century atmosphere.

With the opening of the eighteenth century many changes in design took place. Queen Anne's dozen years were very important, and in nearly every particular were productive of good things. The silver, the mirrors, the candlesticks and all comparatively minor things charm us greatly when we are lucky enough to find them. Some of the best reproductions in silver and pewter are Queen Anne in pattern, and nearly all the furniture thus designated is extremely good. Many of the William and Mary types were developed on lighter lines. The underbraces of chairs, sofas and tables were made as slender as possible, and the refinement of the late eighteenth century was foreshadowed in several ways. Walnut was the wood in general use in Anne's reign and most of the fine fiddle-back chairs so characteristic of the period are in this medium. The method of upholstering is nearly the same in all these pieces. The seat is sunk in the woodwork. The frame is most carefully built, and the seats added after the chair is finished. The fine lines of the wood, enclosing the seat, are an important detail in the designs. Chippendale used this scheme in his early work, but later discarded the wooden band in place of the all-upholstered seat—a type used ex-

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tensively by Hepplewhite and Sheraton. There is a completeness about the frames of Queen Anne chairs which is not found in Hepplewhite and Sheraton designs. The latter must be upholstered in order to look like chairs, otherwise they are merely chair frames, skeletons of chairs, but your old Queen Anne fiddle-back is entirely a chair before the seat is added, so far as the design is concerned, though it might fail on the utility side quite as much as the seatless Hepplewhite or Sheraton.

Chippendale's work is extremely interesting, when viewed from the upholstery standpoint, for it shows a variety which the later cabinetmakers did not approach. Particularly in the furniture made about 1740, did he use several types of upholstery. In one illustration two of Chippendale's chairs will be seen which illustrate his different methods of treating the subject. Incidentally these chairs are fine examples of what the cabinetmaker of St. Martin's Lane could do in the way of backs, arm and legs and other portions of chair designing. The extreme width of the armchair shows that the William and Mary traditions still lingered when it came to large pieces of furniture. There is nothing indicative of that period in the design; but the generous dimensions are truly W. and M. The "wing" chairs of that day

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are built on similar proportions. They are large enough to hold two people comfortably, and it was this fact that gained for them the name "cozy"—often used for the later and narrow type. Wings are among the most interesting of any of the completely upholstered chairs. When finished not a particle of the frame showed; even the legs were hidden. The age of a wing chair can usually be told by these extremities. Chippendale used the ball-and-claw.

Chippendale might have made use of the Louis "Wing" had he seen fit, for his early work followed a few years after the *Grande Monarch's* death, but at that time he was planning his Dutch adaptations, and we can but rejoice that this was the fact. About the middle of the century, he was seized with the French fever and never entirely recovered, though he had intervals of being "Gothic" and "Chinese." But his splendid, early work will always spell Chippendale to us, however he may be rated in his own country. Chippendale's French manner was along Louis XV lines; the vigor and grace of the Louis XIV style had little influence on his designing. After the strength and simplicity of his early furniture, his later pieces seem at times painfully overdone. No uglier chairs and settees can be imagined

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than the famous "shell back" patterns—in which a scallop shell is used as a *motif*. This style is almost unknown over here, and is not common in England. At one time in his busy career, Chippendale executed many private orders, and these fanciful things belong to that period. Royal commissions came his way and countless orders from the nobility. A few interesting letters are extant, in which these matters are set forth in detail.

Chippendale made little pretense of being an upholsterer, but Sheraton and Hepplewhite were proud of their success in this line and included directions for "padding furniture" in their famous books. Sheraton particularly made a fine point of all such matters, and even gave much attention to the hanging and draping of curtains. Chippendale evidently cared for no other fame than that of cabinet-maker, and usually left the upholstering of his chairs to other people.

Hepplewhite used brocades, velvets and many other materials in his work with considerable skill. The seats of his chairs often seem too large for the shield backs. There is undoubtedly a constructive fault in many of these beautiful articles. The shield is too low for the width of the seat, or the supports lack the appearance of strength. The impres-

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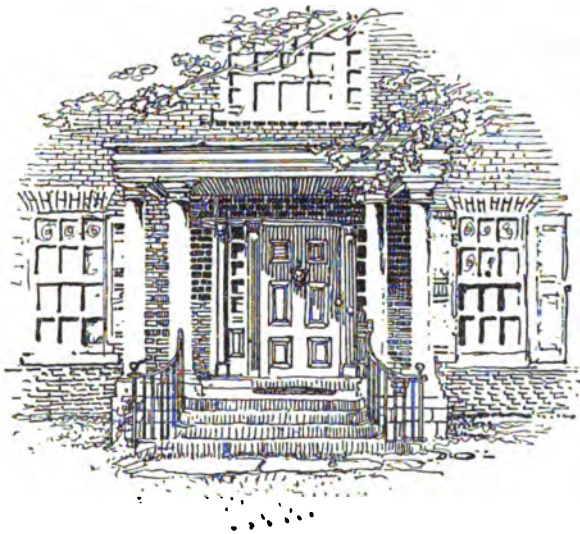
sion given is that the chair is fragile and will not endure; yet the many examples in existence prove this to be untrue. We do not feel this insecurity in looking at Sheraton's chairs. Indeed, this master builder of furniture seldom fails in proportion. Strength and balance are almost always expressed. The great charm of Hepplewhite's furniture cannot be gainsaid, but in his chairs he is seen in his least interesting mood. Sideboards, tables and kindred things represent this graceful designer at his best.

Other furniture-makers, less distinguished, but worthy of greater praise than is usually given to them, were in one or two instances expert upholsterers. Ince and Manwaring had great success with chintz, and the wing chairs of the latter are greatly prized to-day. Many of the modern chintzes are reproductions of this period, and no Colonial bedroom seems complete without its old chinz wing.

During the eighteenth century we had our own upholsterers, and a good deal of the work compared favorably with that of the old country. Wills and inventories of the seventeenth century contain occasional references to materials thus used, and those of the next century abound in items in this line. "Turkey work" is mentioned at an early date—so frequently that one type of chair is called the "Tur-

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key" chair. Following closely on the wainscot came the "Turkey work" chair, in the Colonies. "Oriental work" would be a better term—still "Turkey" is sufficiently indicative of its foreign origin. Not only chairs, but sofas and settees were covered with this interesting stuff, and to-day any of these old pieces would be a great addition to a collection of Colonial furniture.





CHAPTER XV

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY VENTURES

FOR a long time collectors neglected the seventeenth century. The demand for the cabinet-work of the eighteenth century was so great that little attention was paid to the earlier period. It was hard to interest people in anything but mahogany. Colonial styles more than any other seemed to fit the American house.

The present interest in old oak styles is due to several reasons: one to the reaction which invariably takes place after a certain wood has long been in favor; another, that foreign travel gives both purchaser and dealer a different standpoint; a third, the growing tendency on the part of the house-holder to regard furniture as an investment and a willingness to buy for the future as well as for the present.

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It was not until "Mission" furniture suddenly took householders by storm that oak really held its own with mahogany. The "Mission craze" had a great deal to do with the present revival of seventeenth-century oak, although, like other furniture happenings, it did not come about in a minute. The simplicity of mission or "craft" designs won an instant approval and to a certain extent revolutionized living-room and library furniture. It suited certain backgrounds far better than mahogany, being particularly in line with severe trims and plastered walls.

The seventeenth century opened up a mine of material, and as the demand for such furniture increased other types were added. It is now possible to furnish entire rooms in Jacobean and Elizabethan, and with the right setting these old styles are wonderfully interesting. During the past ten years in England there has been a steady increase in the price of old oak furniture. There was a time when the interest in the Chippendale period was greater than in the Jacobean, but that can hardly be said to be the case to-day.

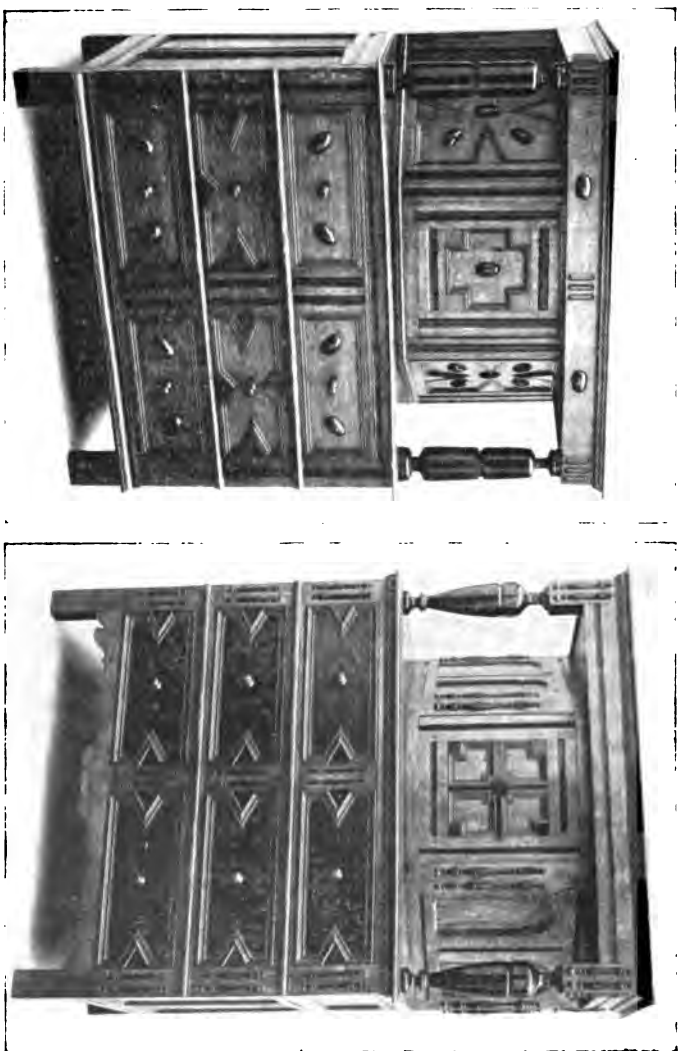
English Renaissance, Tudor, Elizabethan and Jacobean, are terms associated with the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a long period to sum up in

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a sentence, but one which, in spite of "mixed *motifs*," was remarkably homogeneous. Queen Elizabeth was, of course, very much a Tudor, but having been honored by a style all her own, the term "Tudor" is usually applied to the reigns of Henry VII, Henry VIII, and Mary, the latter once called "Bloody," but now politely spoken of as "Mary the Catholic."

Architects in this country usually make a distinction between Elizabethan and Tudor, applying the former to half-timbered work and the latter to earlier stone and brick types. In England "early" and "late Tudor" are frequently heard, and there are many subdivisions, which naturally mean more there than here.

Henry VII's reign began in 1485 and was contemporaneous with the reigns of Charles VIII and Louis XII. Elizabeth's long term ended in 1603, while Henri of Navarre was on the French throne. The early and late Tudor periods—thus covered one hundred and eighteen years, the Virgin Queen appropriating nearly fifty. In company with Victoria, she is quite entitled to her own "style." Kings of other nations came and departed during this long sovereignty, and inasmuch as France and England were closely in touch during the sixteenth century



Jacobean court cupboards, 17th c

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it is interesting to note that the combined reigns of Henri II, Francis II, Charles IX and Henri IV were only a little longer than Elizabeth's forty-five years of power.

The Henri II period is very closely allied to the Elizabethan, through the strapwork *motif* in wood carving, which was popular in Flanders, England, and France. It is seen in many English cupboards of the late sixteenth century and also in chimney breasts and wall treatments. It is one of the most valuable contributions of the Elizabethan period to design, and ranks with the "linen fold" pattern of an earlier day and the "rising panel" of a later one.

Styles in English furniture were of slow growth, with much overlapping and intermingling. The Jacobean period was well under way before there were many changes in design, and it was not until Charles I was on the throne that the popularity of certain Elizabethan patterns completely waned. Even then the outlines of furniture changed little. The court and livery cupboards were modified a trifle to suit a simpler scheme of carving, but oak was still the chief wood, and so long as it remained in use, "massive" furniture continued to be made.

The furniture of Charles II's time, call it Stuart or Jacobean as we may, is worthy of its present

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renaissance. Designers retained the best of the many *motifs* bequeathed from the earlier part of the century, combined with newer schemes. Paneling remained in favor, but it was diversified by nail-head and spindle-ornaments, both illustrated in one of the oak cupboards of this chapter. This is an interesting piece as it shows both old and new schemes. The heavy supports of the upper division are a survival of the early Tudor period. They are found in chairs, tables, and all manner of court and livery cupboards. Constructively the piece is not unlike many Elizabethan designs. The two and even three-sectioned cupboard was a favorite as early as the late sixteenth century. The heavy cornice is also Tudor, but the paneling and particularly the spindle-ornaments place the cupboard at about 1670. Another cupboard shows the charming low relief of Charles II's day.

Tables have escaped description in a manner quite marvelous when their useful qualities are taken into consideration. Cabinets and chairs have always offered so much more inspiration to furniture writers. Tables were just tables, necessary but not romantic. Yet in gathering together a group of these old pieces, or merely selecting a series of photographs, something more than the mere material side of things is

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secured. Take for instance the "table-board" of early American make, illustrated in this chapter: how fine are the proportions! how graceful the lines! With what strength and lightness has the design been built up! It might be of a much earlier date than the first half of the seventeenth century. So far as its construction is concerned it might be one of those "boards" of the Middle Ages, which followed the rude trestle tables. There is a refinement of line, however, not found in the mediæval article.

Early tables were rude in construction. Even when Gothic themes added grace and beauty to nearly every other piece of furniture, tables still looked as if hewn with an ax. The cabinets and chests of that far-away day, of which many are in our museums, show a far finer workmanship. In construction and "finish" they seem a century at least ahead. There are several explanations of the general crudeness of early tables. Trestle designs were made solely for dining, and when not in use were folded away and put out of sight. During meals a long cloth concealed the top, falling nearly to the ground, the richness of the cover often denoting the status of the owner. Plainly it mattered little whether the woodwork beneath were roughly put together or not, or

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whether it were carved. The table itself was probably the last thing the people about the board thought of; other considerations occupied the mind.

Some of the old missals show amusing table scenes. When the "board" was extremely narrow, the diners sat on one side only, outlining the wall as it were, and those in attendance served from the opposite side. Stools and benches were the seats, the master of the house being elevated several inches above his household. Table accommodations were far in advance of sleeping arrangements, although early bedsteads were more elaborately made than early tables.

When the mortise and tenon method of making tables came into use, the trestle type gradually went out. In the table-board of my illustration is seen the later scheme, one, by the way, which many craftsmen here and abroad are now using. It marked a great advance in furniture making and brought about a more permanent style of table. In contrast to the trestle type was the "table dormant," contemporary with it, which was fastened to the floor and naturally quite immovable. Possibly it was at first a kitchen table as frequent mention is made in connection with fireplace cookery. There are doubtless several types in use of which we know nothing.



Early American table-board



English table-bench, early seventeenth century



American gate leg-table, mid seventeenth century

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Writers and illuminators, finding the dining-table especially interesting, devoted more time to it. As descriptions of the table often include lengthy descriptions of the feast we will not quarrel over the matter. But for the old writers we would not know how to roast a peacock nor how to preserve the flavor of a boar's head. Much interesting information regarding mediæval drinks would have been lost, also ancient and mysterious uses of spice.

An old oak table is really far more than just a piece of furniture. It is a commentary on the life of its own period.

An Elizabethan table of heavy, turned legs and stretchers suggests an entirely different mode of existence from a Georgian table of tapering legs and no underbracing. In the same way a seventeenth century table hints at a more refined existence than that of the sixteenth. It is the middle ground between the Elizabethan and the Georgian. Of seventeenth century types several excellent examples are represented—the long, heavy style of early Jacobean days and several gate-legs. The latter are interesting as they are of a class now eagerly sought by collectors, although heavier in build than those in greatest demand. The fine English table has a low foot-rail and is of an earlier

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made in interior decoration, and to the growing discrimination that frowns at a brass bedstead in a room furnished in Louis XV style. Collectors alone could never popularize the antique bedstead, but our decorators, professional and amateur, have brought it into tardy recognition.

Mahogany four-posters, old and new, have long been familiar, but when other periods are reviewed "the right kind of bed" arouses a question. The Colonial bedstead is charming in its place, but it does not "help" much in a Gothic, French or Dutch room. The popularity of the brass bedstead is rooted and grounded in a widespread belief that it will "go" with everything. It has gone with everything in the past, but the wooden bedstead is for the first time in years a decided rival—and the wooden bedstead takes on every conceivable form from earlier Gothic to Mid-Victorian. It is one of the amusing signs of the decorative times that so much that is good has been found in the latter period. Of Victorian bedsteads there are several good models, and decorators are kept busy finding appropriate accompaniments in the way of wallpaper and draperies. It is possible to find ponderous designs in walnut, which almost equal in size the great Bed of Ware, famous in the sixteenth century.

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Among genuine old designs it is remarkable what a number of beautiful things have been found. The seventeenth century alone has yielded so much that it really seems that every house should have at least one bedroom expressing this truly great century. One illustration—a Jacobean bedchamber—shows the charm of the furnishing of this day. Upon the more familiar eighteenth century it is hardly necessary to dwell, for its beautiful bedsteads are well known to us under the various names of Colonial, Georgian, etc.

Turning back to an earlier point, the sixteenth century—while it is difficult to find trustworthy examples, there are a number of authentic specimens in this country and of course a great many more abroad.

The average American will find seventeenth century old enough for every-day purposes, and will be quite content with one really fine bedstead. To build a bedroom around a bedstead is no more difficult than to build a dining-room around a dining-room table, and it is not a whit less interesting. Beginning with the bed, the question of the correct wall treatment should perhaps be considered second. It is so important that if injudiciously chosen a charming room is easily spoilt at the outset. Paneled

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walls are not possible in the usual house in this country, although the beauty of a paneled bedroom is too obvious for comment. The next choice would be a wall covering in the seventeenth century manner. There are many good textiles in reproduction of that far-away day, and several good papers in what may be called "Jacobean style." These wall coverings are adapted from old embroideries and fabrics, and are sufficiently accurate to make a good background for the furniture of the period. There are beautiful figured linens on similar lines, and altogether it is possible to evolve a room which will not offend those who are posted on the subject, and quite as true to life as most of the "Colonial" bedrooms, and truer than the average Louis XV one, which seldom has a wall treatment within a hundred years of the bedstead. The other necessary seventeenth century pieces may be secured, and they are each and all delightful. It is a wonder that this splendid century was allowed to go so long neglected in this country.

Our loyalty to old mahogany blinded us to the beauties of older oak. For many years it was difficult to interest American collectors in anything that was not "Colonial," and decorators seemed unconscious of anything but Colonial and



Jacobean bedstead in paneled oak

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the Louis styles. There were occasional ventures in Gothic or Pompeian, but the successes were not sufficiently conspicuous to encourage many followers. Our first "period rooms" were, if we may judge by the few still left to us, rather dreary places. Fortunately "the late Pullman early North German Lloyd" schemes of interior decoration have gone out, and we shall probably never know them again. They were a blight for a long term of years, marring many homes and making our hotels perfect nightmares of ugliness.

We have learned many things about house-furnishing, and we know that it does not cost a fortune to have period rooms; that rooms in a definite and very old style may be made quite as comfortable and livable as those furnished in the usual modern miscellaneous way, and cost not one bit more. If *old* furniture is used it must be carefully hunted, but it *can* be found, and oftentimes it will not represent any greater outlay than the best of modern cabinet-work.

There is no reason why the house of moderate cost should not have one or more period bedrooms. Quite naturally the first would be Colonial, and the second could be any of the other great periods that made its special appeal. Some people have a nat-

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ural leaning toward oak and others toward the enameled and gilded woods of the Louis styles. Some people fit a rococo background and others do not. It is quite true that a boxed-in bedstead of the early Tudor period would drive some temperaments mad; equally so that your real Jacobite in feeling would be quite unhappy on an entirely sanitary bed of metal. Your dyed-in-the-wool collector is no more afraid of germs than he is of the Riot Act. He abominates the word "sanitary" and particularly dotes on old bedsteads where the tattered and moth-eaten hangings are included. The value of the furniture is, to him, increased fully one-half.

Many of these faded and worn old draperies are exquisite in their mellow, blended tones, and the fragmentary patterns are splendid records of the designing of their day. Their value is hard to estimate, for it is out of all proportion to their actual worth in money. Like the old samplers and other pieces of needlework they have perpetuated many patterns which would otherwise have been lost.

In one of the beautiful bedrooms of the Manor House, Hitchin, is a remarkably fine bedstead of early Jacobean days. The back is incased in paneled wood with a simple but characteristic *motif* in low relief. The cornice and well-designed posts

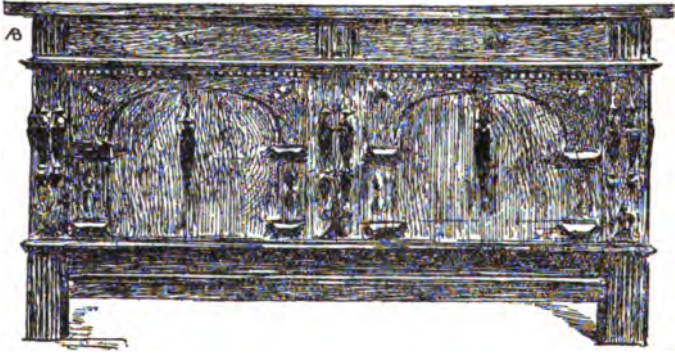
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are beautiful examples of the refined strength which marked most of the work of the day; a decided contrast to the massive schemes of the Tudor period, when most beds were like cages. Those great affairs of wood and tapestry "slept in" by Henry VIII, Elizabeth and Mary Stuart are excellent reasons for the uneasy slumbers of those who wore crowns. Elizabeth's bedsteads dot the English country, and poor Mary's make interesting many Scottish pilgrimages. Holyrood, Edinburg Castle and Stirling contain examples familiar to all who know their Southern Scotland, and the traveler has a real thrill over each.

To William and Mary must be credited the great decline in the popularity of oak. The Dutch styles made fashionable by them could not be executed in such a sturdy medium. Marquetry and veneer needed a pliant wood, and gradually oak, which had served the English furniture maker so faithfully, was set aside in favor of walnut. The new wood was in general use in Queen Anne's time and most of the furniture of her reign was made in it. Walnut held its own until the use of mahogany became general, and then for a long span of years the West India wood was far in the lead, not the only medium, but by far the most highly prized.

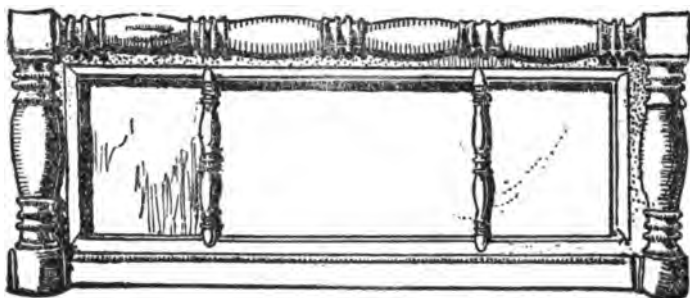
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By and by walnut came in again (our own venerated walnut period corresponding to one phase of Victorian), then a mahogany revival took place, next the oak renaissance—inaugurated by mission and craft styles, and just at present the varied interest in many woods, the mahogany designs returning to the eighteenth-century types and oak styles harking back to the seventeenth.





Seventeenth century bedroom, The Manor, Hitchin, England. Collection of Mr. Phillips



CHAPTER XVI

MAIN TRAVELED ROADS

IN our devotion to the late eighteenth century, we are apt to overlook the early eighteenth, or to confuse it with other periods. There are several reasons for our perfect faith in everything marked "late eighteenth." It was a time of great beauty in design, of unity, of reserve, of elimination. This has come down to us as a tradition and would be accepted without proof, even if proof were lacking. But we have abundant examples of the actual work of the day, countless reproductions, and innumerable books on the subject.

So, in one way or another, we are in no danger of forgetting what the men of that day did, nor of losing sight of their place in the history of design. Yet the first half of this fascinating century was almost as important; a period of great variety in design,

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complete. We think of the long Gothic epoch in England, of the English Renaissance, of Tudor and Jacobean styles, of the brief period of William and Mary, of the dozen years of Queen Anne's reign and of the long Georgian span, and we picture each as quite distinct. We have one great advantage over the people who actually lived during those epochs. We have such a big perspective that we overlook the transitions. Perhaps this is well. A good deal of transitional furniture must have been very ugly. Much of it has perished and we know it only by description, or as we imagine it to have been.

We cannot tell how it will be with our own composite age, but in the past there has been a survival of the fittest in furniture. The transitional Gothic and transitional Renaissance pieces are not nearly so numerous as pure specimens, and so it is with Elizabethan furniture, with Charles II pieces, with Queen Anne designs, with examples of Chippendale and his contemporaries. The experimental pieces—the failures—have apparently disappeared. Modern furniture-makers have rendered marked assistance in reproducing the best, the most typical specimens and thus perpetuating the good. The value of a correct reproduction, both as an example

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of a style and a well-made piece of work, must be conceded. Personally I do not *love* a modern Chippendale chair as I do an old one, but I have a great *liking* for it, and a real admiration for the man who made it.

Reproductions are usually more successful than adaptations—faithful copies rather than free translations. This is particularly true of mahogany designs. The oak furniture of the seventeenth century can sometimes be more freely interpreted, if there be skill of hand, and taste and discrimination back of the skill. But with the furniture of the succeeding century, he is wisest and most successful who does not alter a line but reproduces as truthfully as is possible.

Chippendale's name stands first in the furniture-making of his day—in fact it may be claimed that his name still looms largest in the list of cabinet-makers of the eighteenth century—however our personal preferences may be for the work of other men. If we believe that he was well established as early as 1720, we must accord him a prominent place in the early Georgian period.

We know Chippendale best by his later work—that which was produced between 1750 and 1765, but his early manner will always charm. His bandy

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leg and fiddle-back chairs may never bring what his famous ribbon-backs do, yet they have infinite grace and if measured by "simplicity" are more to be desired. Chippendale in company with other furniture-makers of the day, made liberal use of what the William and Mary period had handed down to the Queen Anne, and what the Queen Anne in turn had given to the Georgian. Other influences shaped this designer's first work, notably the traditions of Grinling Gibbons. Gibbons and Wren belong to an earlier day, but their influence was very marked in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. Chippendale's carving is quite in the Gibbons manner and the same may be said of Gibbs, Ware, Kent, and Swan, men less known than our cabinet-maker of St. Martin's Lane, but all deserving more credit than has been doled out to them. Their names, however, have not been kept alive by their work.

What furniture of the eighteenth century would have been if mahogany had been unknown is a difficult question to answer. It is impossible to imagine Chippendale's designs in oak—just as it is impossible to conceive of the heavy furniture of the seventeenth century being executed in mahogany. There seems to have been a special fitness, a special providence so to speak, which gave to each period in



Mahogany chest of drawers, early eighteenth century

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furniture-making the right wood. The wood, however, probably determined the design, not the design the wood. If Chippendale and his fellow craftsmen had had only oak to work with, they would have produced entirely different schemes. That they were tremendously indebted to the introduction of mahogany they perhaps did not realize, but we do, and rate them accordingly.

Thomas Sheraton, Thomas Shearer, George Hepplewhite, and Robert Adam are the names which stand out brightest in the roster of the late eighteenth century. Possibly Robert Adam should come first and Shearer fourth. Transpose them as you will, but place Sheraton near the top. It might be well to mark both Adam and Sheraton "one" for it is hard to divide the honors.

Chippendale we do not count in this group—though accord him highest rank in his own day—a day ending as Robert Adam was coming into prominence. At that time, a little later than the middle of the century, English designing was at a low ebb. Chippendale's furniture had been losing vitality for a decade. As the famous cabinet-maker of St. Martin's Lane became more French he grew less English, nor did he in losing certain sturdy English traditions gain any of the true lightness and grace

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of French designing. The last edition of the "Director," 1763, shows with what a heavy hand he followed rococo lines, and into what absurd schemes they led him. He weakly copied the French; his contemporaries weakly copied him.

Robert Adam, fresh from his studies in Italy, returned to England at an opportune time. With him came Bartolozzi, the engraver, and Pergolesi and Cipriani, the painters, all destined to play an important part in English arts. Cipriani and Pergolesi decorated many costly pieces designed by this famous Scotchman, for Scotch Robert Adam was, though most Englishmen seem to have forgotten the fact. It would not be fair to leave out James Adams, or to pass over two other gifted brothers. Adams, Sr., was also a distinguished person. As a family they were a remarkably talented set. Robert was undoubtedly the most original, best known in his own day and now quite justly the most famous. "Adam" usually means Robert, while the "Adam Brothers" include Robert and James. It was not so much their actual work as their tremendous influence, which has given them lasting fame. Many of their most important buildings have long since been pulled down to make way for the encroachments of modern London. The loss of

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the buildings is less to be deplored than the fact that their exquisite interior work has largely perished. Enough exists to show how masterly was their treatment of doors, mantels and windows. In all metal work, such as locks and escutcheons, candle-holders, brackets for lamps, mirror frames, etc., they displayed a marvelous grasp of detail. To-day their fame rests on these items quite as much as on their larger undertakings; and in America at least, they are best known by this work. These ornamental details, together with the furniture designed by them, constitute the Adam style to us.

We recognize the urn and the oval pateræ as Adam; also certain *motifs* like the acanthus, the ribbon band, the arabesque and the garland, as both Adam and Louis XVI. There is a good deal of similarity between the two styles. We find in Adam furniture a greater slenderness and a totally different treatment of the wood. The brothers used carving very sparingly; many of their finest pieces have not a trace of it.

In Adam furniture a charming light green is often seen; there is also a burnished gold which almost equals Vernis-Martin. Cipriani had many Italian secrets of mixing colors and a good deal of this work is from his hand. Cane furniture was de-

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signed by the brothers and is, to-day, the type most frequently reproduced by American furniture-makers. The chair backs are usually oval and the cane webbing follows the lines of the frames. The legs are usually round and are characteristic of the period. By this time the square leg had been to a large measure discarded. Hepplewhite, however, preferred the square to the round one; Shearer did likewise; Sheraton used both the plain, round leg and the square leg; he also had a strong preference for the fluted leg of the Louis XVI style. In most of the Sheraton furniture in this country the fluted leg is seen. In the sideboards especially it is a characteristic feature.

The acanthus leaf, beloved by the Adam brothers, by Sheraton and especially by French furniture-makers, needs a word quite its own. Without doubt it is the most famous leaf in existence. We see it in the high posts of Colonial bedsteads, in the legs of Louis XVI chairs, in the mouldings of marriage coffers of the Renaissance, and coming to mightier things, in the ornamental details of many public buildings. It is not always depicted in the same manner, but its identity is unmistakable; its personal history would fill a book. Wherever there is a return to the classic, the acanthus



Hepplewhite sideboard, owned by a Salem collector, a fine specimen of the tambour-serpentine type

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promptly makes its appearance. It was prominent in Greek and Roman decoration, appears again in the Renaissance, and assumes great importance in the French styles of the eighteenth century. Other leaves there are and beautiful ones, as the oak, the horse-chestnut, and the bay, but the old designers made use of them sparingly, depending on the long foliated acanthus for the desired effect.

Webster defines this leaf as "a genus of herbaceous prickly plants, found in the south of Europe, Asia Minor and India." The Greeks and Romans discarded the prickles but retained the foliations. In Renaissance ornament the leaf is used in a more flexible way, the indentations are deeper and more rolling, and the leaf does not lie so closely to the background. Colonial designers gave it great reserve, a formality seldom found in Renaissance treatment, and often lacking in the early classic manner, as if they were trying to out-Greek the Greeks, as they often did. Even the four-post bedstead shows the carved acanthus demurely outlining the posts—no exuberant Renaissance fancies, never for a moment the turnings and twistings beloved by the Louis XV craftsmen when they went in for the acanthus, nor yet the heavy ponderous leaf of the Louis XIV style, nor quite the

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delicate severity of the Louis XVI handling—but a simpler, plainer acanthus, robbed of some of its beauties, it must be confessed, but always splendidly subservient; never a means to an end, and never, as is often the case with the French rendering, existing merely for its own sake.

Take the bedpost, which, if less romantic than the dower chest, has the advantage of being common enough to make a good illustration, and trace it through its several phases of mid-eighteenth century, late eighteenth century and early nineteenth. We find the leaf in three or four guises, but always quite simple. American Empire designers gave it a spirited handling but kept it always quite flat. The post was always a post—carved in low relief—never a carved acanthus with an excuse of a post underneath. So it is with other pieces which we call Colonial. Many of the fine eighteenth century chairs of our drawing-rooms have the acanthus, but we hunt a moment to find it. We have scarcely recognized it as such, it is so much a part of the construction. Sheraton was particularly successful in this regard. In many of his sofa or settee designs he used the acanthus with greatest skill. Here we find the leaf in the Louis XVI manner. The legs are usually straight and the acanthus is

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flat, and has a greater elegance than its companion on the Empire bedstead, but both, if we look a second time, are admirably adapted to their respective places.

An American Empire bedstead has several classic details inherited via the Renaissance; the leaf as mentioned, the rosette, and the honeysuckle,—the latter the Greek anthemion—here serving the humble position as ornament to a bedpost, but boasting a lineage dating back to the early temples of Greece.

The honeysuckle is especially interesting in connection with the American Empire side of the Colonial question, for it is a frequent detail in brass decorations. The designers of the French Empire gave it special honor, together with the laurel leaf, the bees, the torch and wreath, and other Napoleonic emblems. The furniture-makers of the American Empire were particularly happy in the way they sifted, sorted, discarded, and accepted French details. They had no especial liking for the Sphinx, which after Napoleon's Egyptian campaign was given great prominence by French craftsmen, but they welcomed the eagle, to be sure an American bird quite as much as Roman or French, and they seized with real art—and craft—such details as the honeysuckle, Greek fret, and numerous bor-

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ders which harked back through the Renaissance to more ancient days. They were especially successful in the legs and supports of furniture things; winged-feet, and eagle talons, and balls and claws. Tables of this period often show a rounded column rising from a base, supported by very spirited talons, while on many sofas the winged-feet are a beautiful accessory. Rosettes carved in the wood or chiseled in brass are often present and the same piece will occasionally show the honeysuckle and the acanthus. As there are in this country ten examples of American Empire to every one of Chippendale or Sheraton, it is interesting to study the various "points," and if you have the opportunity, to compare them with Renaissance pieces.

Sheraton was a many-sided genius who died without knowing the value of his own furniture. He regretted all his life that he had not studied for the ministry. He had none of Chippendale's egotism, and would have been incapable of saying of one of his own chairs—"If I may speak without vanity it is the best I have seen and possibly the best that has been made."

Although modest to a degree which was fatal to financial gains, he could not forbear giving Chippendale a few raps from time to time. In the pref-



Rare example of a ball-and-claw bedstead, possibly Chippendale. Cornice of later date

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ace of his "Drawing Book," published in 1790, he says of Chippendale: "His designs are now wholly antiquated though well made and excellently suited to their day." And elsewhere: "People of taste no longer care for this furniture." And true it was. By the last decade of that famous century, the fancy was no longer for carved mahogany; in many instances it was no longer for mahogany of any kind. Inlaid furniture of satinwood and painted furniture of satinwood represented the taste of the hour. Many writers have credited to Sheraton the introduction of satinwood. If this be true he gave almost as much to the Adam Brothers as they gave to him. It was a period of giving and taking, yet each of the great designers retained his individuality.

Sheraton's furniture may be divided into three classes—carved, inlaid and painted. His sideboards and chairs come usually under the first head; his cabinets and tables, the latter found in great variety in England, to the second; and to the third, belongs a large portion of the work he did for the Adam Brothers, which is extremely scarce in this country. Some of his inlay has as much color as if executed with the brush. Sycamore was a favorite wood with him and under the name of "harewood"

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was a given beautiful golden brown. Combined with satinwood or white mahogany, it was extremely effective. Whitewood was stained apple green, that lovely tone which Kauffmann and Cipriani were so successful in securing. Other woods Sheraton used with consummate skill. He was thus able to give to his simplest designs a real color value.

Hepplewhite's greatest contribution to the furniture-making of the late eighteenth century was his masterly use of heart and shield shaped *motifs*. Most of his chairs have shield-backs, but it was in his dressing-tables and kindred things that this theme is seen in its most charming guise. "Charm" is the word to give his work. The strength of Chippendale; the proportion of Sheraton we do not find. His range is limited. His knowledge of woods did not equal Sheraton's—he had none of Chippendale's mastery of construction—yet he had a fine intuitive feeling for beauty and he expressed it in his work. He was not a carver of note, like Chippendale, not a master inlayer, like Sheraton, yet so great was his popularity that he employed many men to help him fill his commissions, and his reputation was so well established that after his death in 1785, his widow was able to carry on his business for years. Until

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quite recently "A. Hepplewhite" has been mentioned in furniture annals as a probable brother of George Hepplewhite. In fact, there seems to have been a good deal of mystery over the identity of G. and A. Hepplewhite. Alice Hepplewhite conducted her husband's business over the signature of A. Hepplewhite & Company—a circumstance which must have been well known at the time, but apparently soon forgotten and only lately rediscovered.

Neither Sheraton nor Hepplewhite could rob Chippendale of his supremacy as a chair-maker. Sheraton's well-known designs with straight legs and rectangular backs are not his most attractive work. In Hepplewhite's chairs his famous shield seems to lack constructive force. Chippendale still held his field. Sheraton's sideboards, cabinets, tables and bedsteads reach high water mark. Hepplewhite sideboards and tables are also greatly to his credit. To Sheraton we accord a grasp of proportion and a feeling for restraint which were not equaled in his generation. If we place him at the head of the furniture-makers of his century it is because he expresses the ideals of our own day—simplicity, proportion and reserve. Chippendale produced a far greater variety of designs, not alone because variety in design appealed to him,

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but because he lived at a time when fashions in furniture were extremely diversified. The last quarter of the eighteenth century was a remarkably unified period, and here tribute must again be paid Robert Adam, for he was largely responsible for producing it.

Many people have tried to define the work of the Adam brothers, but no one has expressed it better than did Robert himself in the preface of his book, that now very scarce edition, engraved by Bartolozzi: "If we have any claim to approbation we found it on this alone: that we have been able to seize, with some degree of success, the beautiful spirit of antiquity, and to transfuse it with novelty and variety through our numerous works." It is this beautiful classic spirit which we find in so much of Sheraton's work, a quality which is above and beyond the change of fashions.

Thomas Shearer must be mentioned as a designer of mark—particularly successful with sideboards and bookcases. The serpentine sideboard is supposed to have been originated by him. Hepplewhite gave this type distinction and it is his name which we usually associate with it.

Richard and Robert Gillow, Ince and Manwaring should at least have a paragraph. Edwards and



Knife boxes in Adam style, made by Sheraton



Late Georgian table with knife boxes. Collection of Mr. Phillips



MAIN TRAVELED ROADS

Darley, Batty and Thomas Langley, Thomas Johnson and Abram Swan belong to this century, but not all of the same period. Manwaring and Ince were contemporaries of the Adams; the other men of an earlier day. Johnson was more rococo than Chippendale in his most florid manner; Edwards and Darley were the chief exponents of the Chinese taste; Swan worked in the Gibbons manner. Most of these men published books of their designs, although no publication of the century in the furniture line equaled Chippendale's famous "Director."

Fortunately we know Chippendale by his actual furniture, not by the florid drawings of his book. Inasmuch as his simple pieces were the ones imported in this country, we are often quite unfamiliar with his most elaborate designs and do not always recognize them as Chippendale, when we find them in England, or come across them in English publications.

Chippendale thought lightly of his plain designs. Of his ornate ribbon-backs he was tremendously proud. Could he have foreseen that more than a century later a set of his comparatively plain chairs would bring the astonishing price of one thousand dollars apiece, he would have thought the collectors of America quite mad, and with excellent reason.

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Two hundred pounds for a plain mahogany chair, and he was glad to get ten for a ribbon-back! These famous chairs, eight in number, were sold about seven years ago, when the late Dr. Crim's famous collection of old furniture came under the hammer. They were known as the Francis Scott Key chairs and had a comparatively interesting history, but it was the fact that they were genuine Chippendales, from the St. Martin's shop, that caused them to bring so high a price. A piece of furniture must be more than old; it must be more than correct in design; it must also carry with it the guarantee that it was made by the master—otherwise it is merely in "the style of" so and so; Chippendale or Sheraton or Hepplewhite, as the case may be.





CHAPTER XVII

CHINESE INFLUENCE

THAT gold mine for the decorators and the furniture makers—the eighteenth century—has few unexplored corners. Now that old English lacquer is again revived after years of forgetfulness, it will take a Columbus in decorative discovery to bring anything really new to light. Just what *that* will be, is difficult to predict. It is doubtful, however, if the interest in lacquered furniture will be more than a passing fad.

Fashions in furniture are of brief duration unless furniture-makers are interested. Old lacquer does not lend itself readily to reproduction. Unlike cane and various painted types, it does not possess qualities which make it practical for the average

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house. Collectors will always prize it, and in a limited way it will appeal to a wider audience. As a phase of English furniture-making it is well worth studying, and the wonder is that it has remained so long in oblivion.

The blending of Chinese and Japanese *motifs* by English designers, imported by way of Holland, led to unique and extraordinary results. Some of the old pieces are baffling as to origin, although a truly Oriental piece of lacquer could never be mistaken for anything else. With all their zeal, Dutch and English furniture makers could not *reproduce* lacquer. They could imitate in a most ingenious manner, but the real secrets of transparent varnish were never mastered by them. Certain French inventions come nearer to Oriental "lac." but the actual furniture bears little resemblance to anything imported from China or Japan.

Vernis Martin furniture, with its lustrous surface, has many of the qualities of real lacquer, but its color, design and decorations are as truly French as Louis XV's monogram on Sèvres china.

Some of the old Dutch furniture has a much stronger Oriental feeling, and of all European lacquer-work is probably the cleverest imitation. Holland's commercial intercourse with the far East gave



Highboy of American lacquer, 1745. Interesting example of Chinese influence

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her a great advantage over her sister countries. In the seventeenth century Dutch merchants, returning from Nagasaki, brought back lacquered boxes and screens. In the early part of the eighteenth century, commissions were sent out to Nagasaki, and special furniture made to order for the Dutch market. Thus a type, Japanese in make and decoration, but Dutch in outline, found its way to Holland. This was quite unlike anything the Japanese made for themselves and equally remote from what Dutch furniture-makers a little later made for themselves. It also differed from the real Dutch furniture ornamented with panels taken from real Japanese work. The lacquer question when confined to Holland is complicated enough, but when France imported from Holland, and England from France, and when Chinese artisans copied Japanese designs in order to meet the demand, the subject becomes too mixed for easy discussion.

It was during the reign of William and Mary that lacquered furniture was brought from Holland to England in large quantities. Like Dutch marquetry it gave English designers something fresh and new to follow. Lacquered furniture of Continental make was known in England in a limited way at an earlier period, and real Oriental pieces from early

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days. Persian lacquer was brought back by the Crusaders, but English furniture-making was not in any way influenced by it. Persian influence survived in English needlework, particularly in samplers with their borders of "Persian pink" and their exquisite color schemes.

English furniture designing was influenced by Chinese and Japanese lacquer work at two distinct periods; the first, as mentioned, in the late seventeenth century, when William and Mary were on the throne, and again about the middle of the eighteenth, when Chippendale and his followers produced that remarkable furniture classed as "Chinese." The earlier is the more important and far more interesting, for it led to unexpected ends and lasted well into the next century, finding an echo in this country as late as 1740. By that date it was nearly time for the second craze in England.

A beautiful old piece of American lacquered furniture, founded on the English adaptation of the Chinese is in the form of a high chest of drawers in the Bolles collection of the Metropolitan Museum. The color of the wood is a dull brownish black, a tone that genuine Oriental lacquer never takes, showing that some of the mysteries of the art were unknown to the maker. Upon this somewhat

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dingy background are many small decorations in the way of birds, pagodas, dragons, flowers and people—the latter very amusing. The outlines of the chest—really a high-boy—are beautiful. The long slender cabriole-legs terminate in flat or “duck” feet. In the cornice is seen the straight heavy molding that went out of use when the scroll-top came in, and which in furniture and clocks so definitely places the date as not later than the first half of the eighteenth century.

Beautiful old straight topped pieces! so long neglected for the ever popular scroll, but now highly prized and most highly priced.

In the clocks of the eighteenth century, English lacquer work is at its best. “Japanning,” the process was usually called, particularly when the treatment was extremely Chinese. A good example is the famous timepiece in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, made by Marmaduke Storr and later owned by John Hancock. It has a rounded or dome top. By that time the flat, simple cornice was a thing of the past. The John Hancock clock is as well known perhaps, as any tall timepiece in this country. The case is covered with a thick, even coat of lacquer, still in an excellent state of preservation, and the decorations are better than the average English-

BY-PATHS IN COLLECTING

Chinese medley. Three balls surmount the pointed finials, and above the fine brass face is a smaller dial. Columns support the arched top, which in turn upholds the dome and balls. The workmanship is very fine and on the whole it is a decidedly interesting old piece, aside from the fact that it is a valuable example of English workmanship.

At an early date in the Colonies "japanning" was a thriving trade. Old inventories make mention of tables, chests, and a host of small articles. Occasionally old Japanese boxes are found which show the process in all its beauty. Mother-of-pearl is sometimes used as an inlay, also pewter and tiny particles of coral and ivory.

Of Chinese lacquer the best things in this country are the beautiful trays, tea-caddies, fan-boxes and small chests which were brought from China in the early days of American shipping. Many a "venture" in silver coins came back in the form of Chinese lacquers, and these to-day grace many an old cabinet in Salem and Marblehead. Now that the interest in these old things is reviving, perhaps they may again come forth, and in the course of time find their way to other collections.

One period in the furniture career of Thomas Chippendale has had comparatively little interest



English marquetry cabinet in Chinese style, early
eighteenth century



Black and gold lacquer, Anglo-Chinese,
about 1700

CHINESE INFLUENCE

for American collectors, and that is the Chinese. Just at present Chinese-Chippendale is in great demand in London, and mildly popular in this country. English and American collectors, however, go independent ways, and it is scarcely probable that the fad, if such it may be called, will have any permanent influence here. One excellent reason is that there is very little actual furniture to collect; in fact, not many pieces of genuine Chinese-Chippendale in this country. Even museum collections, rich in eighteenth-century English, have little representing this brilliant but erratic epoch in the life of T. Chippendale.

There are many pieces of furniture in this country which are mildly suggestive of Chinese influence, a large percentage being of American make. These are in the form of chairs and settees with simple frets, Chinese so called, but betraying their honest Colonial origin in every line. This furniture is interesting and valuable, but not Chippendale. The pieces now in demand are very elaborate, and bear the tradition, at least, of coming straight from the shop in St. Martin's Lane. Illustrations of such may be found in "The Gentleman and Cabinet Maker's Director," also in monographs on Chippendale's work.

BY-PATHS IN COLLECTING

A well-known collector of eighteenth-century mahogany once said to the writer that he gained most of his knowledge of Chippendale's elaborate work from old furniture advertisements in English magazines. These he had gathered into a scrap-book as examples of what not to collect. For him the Gothic and Chinese and ornate French designing had not a whit of charm. He hunted plain ribbon-backs, pierced splats, and plain cabrioles throughout the four seasons of the year. As he had never been in England he knew very little about the greater bulk of Chippendale's work. An English collector would say that he did not know Chippendale at all, and in one sense the statement would be entirely true. He wanted to live with his old furniture, however, and from the standpoint of house furnishing he knew his cabinet-maker well and at his best. The plainer pieces, which he cheerfully spent large sums of money in securing, were entirely fitted to his house and gave a satisfaction which the more elaborate pieces would have failed to do. Furniture to him meant pieces to be loved and used.

The marquetry writing-cabinet in Chinese vein would have little interest for him. He would not have cared whether it were the work of Chippendale, or, as is probable, of an earlier cabinet-maker still

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under the traditions of the late seventeenth century. This desk is a valuable example of eighteenth-century Chinese as evolved by an English furniture maker. It is so very Chinese, yet entirely English. As a specimen of intricate marquetry it is also important. Chippendale had the reputation of being a great carver and an indifferent inlayer. He seems to have worked between two great periods of decorated furniture, the first of marquetry, the second of inlay, not at all the same, but frequently confused. The desk is too heavy in outline to be Chippendale's, yet similar to a good deal of his early work. The date is probably near 1715. "Early eighteenth century" would be a safe classification.

Chippendale is better known than many of his fellow-workers, yet it would be hardly fair to leave out Edwards, Langley and Darly, all exponents of Oriental "taste." Chippendale's own attitude toward the Chinese influence is neatly summed up in his advice to cabinet-makers:

"In other words, the main object is to induce the gentleman to buy! First discover which model he likes and then suit him with the enrichment; the ornamentations are not necessarily individually appropriate, but are interchangeable. If his taste runs to the Chinese now in vogue, here is an assortment

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of frets from which to select; if Gothic, here are a few examples of window tracery; if he likes florid carving, here is a storehouse of suggestions conveyed from the French Renaissance!

“I have been encouraged to begin and carry on this work not only by persons of distinction, but of eminent taste for performances of this sort; they have, upon other occasions, signified some surprise and regret that an art capable of so much perfection and refinement, should be executed with so little propriety and elegance.”

And again:

“For simple elegance, combined with the odd, but not the grotesque, the fanciful, but not the absurd, to patrons of refined taste, I would commend the Chinese designs.”





Chinese lacquer—K'ang-Hsi period, 1680



English lacquered cabinet—eighteenth century



CHAPTER XVIII

COLLECTING OLD PIANOS

SEeking old pianos is like hunting old book-cases. In one instance a secretary is usually purchased; in the other a melodeon. The latter is well worth acquiring, provided it is not called a *spinet*.

Twenty years ago no one wanted a melodeon. It was neither old nor new, but to-day it is quaint enough to win admiration, and small enough to fit into a moderate-sized room. The mellow tone of the wood, the deep, yellow tinge of the keys, and the general grace of the design make of it an excellent addition to studio or living-room.

In comparison with the square and upright pianos of recent memory, it is a thing of beauty. As we classify "old" articles, it is quite as ancient as several

COLLECTING OLD PIANOS

other possessions, which, if we were more exact, we would label 1850 rather than 1820.

The pianos of 1820 are often called "Colonial," and not long ago I received a photograph of a charming American-Empire design, which the owner knew had been in the family two hundred years. It was, in fact, a very perfect example of its class, and the owner's enthusiasm was not misplaced. She had, however, added just one hundred years to its age. The value, on the other hand, was underestimated. She did not care to sell the instrument, but wished to know, for her own satisfaction, if it were worth as much as a hundred and fifty dollars. Her family said "a thousand," but she felt that they knew nothing of its real value. In this particular she was correct. The attractive little instrument, with its six turned legs, and beautiful brass ornaments, should be valued at about three hundred dollars, not so much on account of its age, as for the fact that it is a remarkably fine example of an uncommon type. There are two drawers with rosette pulls, and many ornamental brasses. The music rack is in the form of a harp; on the whole a delightful piece of work and one that should remain in the same family for another hundred years.

The possibility of locating a spinet, virginal, or

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harpsichord, is remote, unless a museum pilgrimage be made. There are, however, a few very old instruments owned in private collections, but the chances of their being offered for sale are not among antique probabilities. In collecting, the unexpected often happens, and the purchase of a spinet made by Charles Haward or Thomas Hitchcock might become a reality. It is, at least, worth keeping in mind by those who are determined to own one.

Many spinets bearing the Hitchcock name were brought to this country during the eighteenth century. There were two brothers, Thomas and John, and their signatures on a little, old, time-worn piece of mahogany are highly valued to-day. Their instruments were seldom dated, but the fact that every article coming from their London shop was numbered and registered has made it possible to assign approximate dates.

While musical instruments of the spinet, virginal and harpsichord class followed in a general way the lines adopted by furniture designers, there were limitations which the maker of chairs and tables were not obliged to take into consideration. As with chairs and tables, the legs of all keyboard instruments are indicative of the approximate age. These extremities did not conform to changes in fashion

BY-PATHS IN COLLECTING

as rapidly as those of the pieces mentioned. It is usually a safe plan to date the instrument a little later than the design would indicate. Thus we find the fluted Sheraton leg, and the tapering spade-foot of Hepplewhite used by certain-makers as late as 1810. In a like manner the turned legs of the Empire appear as late as 1830. Generally an instrument is not so old as it looks. Several makers always dated their work, and with Continental specimens the men who repaired or restored were considerate enough of future generations to add a date. A beautiful harpsichord of cedar, gilded and painted with coats of arms and arabesques, bears the maker's name, Jerome de Zantis, with the date 1666. It was restored by a Florentine, Joannes Ferrini, in 1775. Such details are very gratifying to the owner of an old instrument, for it removes all doubt as to the time, the place, and the maker. This sumptuous harpsichord, seven feet in length, has keys of boxwood, with black sharps. The boxwood keys would serve to indicate the period if the date were lacking. Ivory keys belong to a later day. In the Metropolitan Museum is this elaborate instrument, as are also the simpler specimens illustrated.

The plainer designs are purposely chosen, as they are of the type known in our Colonial period, and



Spinet made by Charles Haward, London, 1684



Piano made by Erard Frères et Cie, 1800.

COLLECTING OLD PIANOS

more nearly approach the instruments which might be found if time and diligence and a well-filled purse were devoted to the effort.

The terms "spinet," "virginal" and "harpsichord" are often used for the same instrument in a rather hazy way; "clavichord" sometimes adds to the confusion. The two general distinctions made by musicians and by those who have given study to the mechanism of keyboard "actions" are the separating of the early "plucked" type from the later "struck" variety. These "actions," so alike on the surface, are far from simple. Indeed the subject may grow almost too complicated for a comfortable hobby.

The lover of old instruments need not dip deeply into this matter, unless interested on the musical side. From a collector's standpoint, it is merely necessary to remember that under the head of the simple word "plucked," all spinets, virginals and harpsichords are classed. Under the awkward word "struck" are placed clavichords, pianos and that rare instrument, the dulcimer. The latter is only a little more than a yard wide, has but three octaves and is more primitive in construction than several of the pieces illustrated. It is the kind of instrument which one occasionally sees made over into a desk, or kept continually closed and used as a table.

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Portable dulcimers are of very ancient origin, and are seen in many old religious paintings.

A certain fascination surrounds the name "spinet." No other keyboard article is quite so interesting. Probably no other term has been so abused. The fact that in England, until after the Restoration, "spinet" and "virginal" were used interchangeably, while on the Continent, virginal was applied only to the five-sided or six-sided instrument, has made a good deal of confusion. After the accession of Charles II "spinet" became the usual designation of the "plucked" actions. With the careful cataloguing of a museum several of the sixteenth century and early seventeenth century instruments in the Metropolitan are marked "spinet or virginal." One also learns that the oblong or rectangular case was known as the *spinetta travola*. Charming indeed are many of these little old things, painted with flowers and landscapes, and bearing, in exquisite text, the name, city and date. A model of each action is exhibited for those who, like the now forgotten Toddy of "Helen's Babies," wish to know how the wheels go round.

In the virginal or spinet action the key rail carries a jack, fitted with a quill or, leather plectrum, which, when the key is depressed, rises and plucks

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the string in passing. A model of the clavichord action shows that the string is struck by an upright metal tangent or hammer inserted in the key rail. Models of the interior mechanism of the latest pianos may be inspected and interesting comparisons made. The usual visitor will be sufficiently entertained by the beautiful cases, which give in sequence all the stages from the early Italian types, down to Benjamin Franklin's experiments in the musical line.

About the year 1709, Bartolommeo Cristofori, the Paduan harpsichord maker, introduced an action in which the quill, or plectrum and the tangent were supplanted by a hammer; this, when the key was depressed, was brought into contact with a small lever, which, in turn, raised a second lever, and the principle here introduced still forms the basis on which the actions of all modern pianos are built.

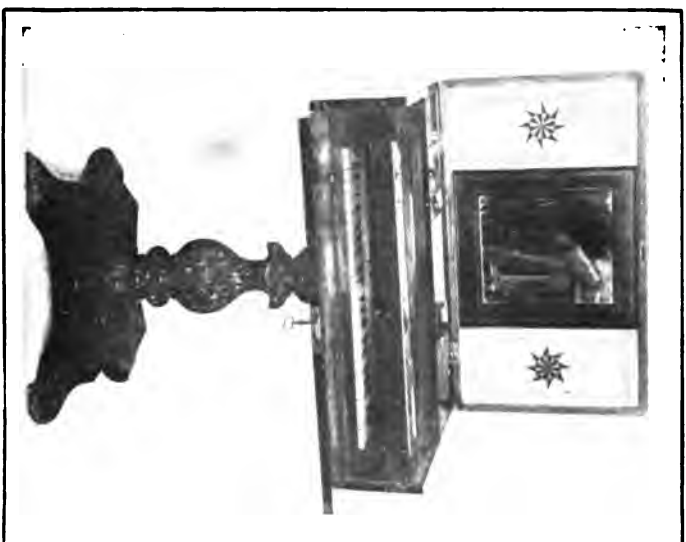
Names to remember are the two Hitchcocks, Charles Haward, patronized by Samuel Pepys; Cristofori, Ruckers of Flanders, Louis Bellot of France, Carl Lang of Germany, Brodrick of England, George Astor, also English; Thomas Western, John Broadwood & Sons, Clementi & Company, the latter especially important, as the Clementi firm sent representatives to New York to open warerooms in that city.

COLLECTING OLD PIANOS

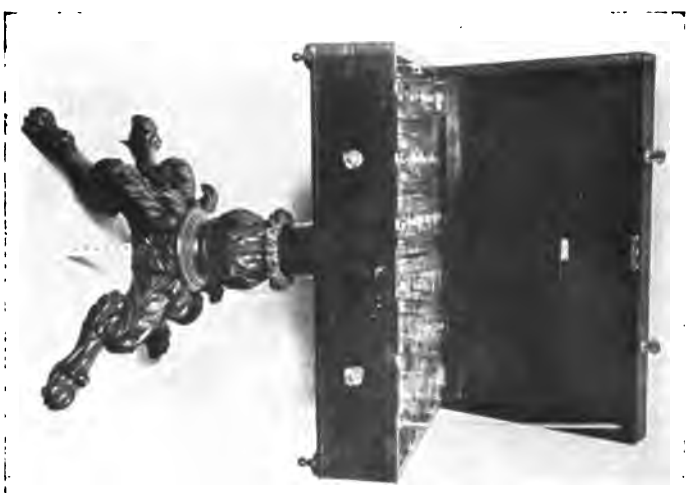
In the opening year of the nineteenth century there were a number of local makers in New York, Boston and Philadelphia. In 1833, the Chickering piano was a novelty. The Chickerings are still making pianos, and we can but wish that they would reproduce some of their old designs with modern works.

It is inconceivable that a hundred years from now anyone will diligently hunt a baby grand, or even wish to give it house room as a collector's piece. Naturally the maker of a modern piano has a different problem from that of old Thomas Hitchcock who found three and a half feet of mahogany quite sufficient for the length of his instrument. Still, lovers of good design will always regret that the makers of modern cases do not follow the traditions of the past; adapting and modifying if necessary, but holding to those principles of simplicity and beauty which should belong to all times.

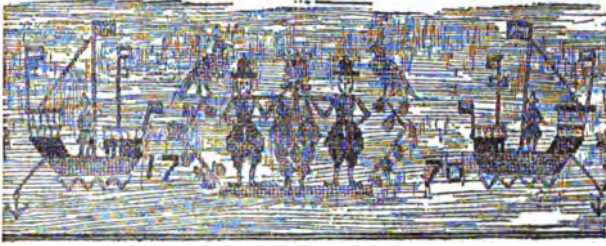




Work-box piano, four octaves, early nineteenth century,
American



Case of musical glasses, early nineteenth century,
European



CHAPTER XIX

THE QUEST OF THE QUAIN

BAND-BOXES and samplers, while quite unlike, are related by reason of a certain quaintness. Snuff-boxes and silhouettes make a similar appeal, although not always to the same people.

Many individuals who are quite unmoved by rare silver and porcelain find it difficult to pass by an old sampler. Others, who care little for mahogany or pewter, wax enthusiastic over band-boxes. The reason is not always clear; sometimes quite misty in the minds of the very ones who are so fascinated. Faded cross-stitches and queer, figured, old hat receptacles! Seldom beautiful, but "quaint" and consequently quite adorable.

A personal quality is ever present with band-

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boxes, and not very remote from samplers. It is this personal touch which has much to do with the spell which this old thing undoubtedly cast over some people. Those who collect boxes of all kinds naturally include the "band" variety in addition to snuff, patch and other boxes. Wig-boxes offer an interesting, though limited field, and those who specialize on boxes of all kinds could name many types which are entirely unknown to the rest of the collecting brotherhood. In the Metropolitan Museum is a tiny band-box of vivid coloring, containing a doll's bonnet, and there are several charming oval boxes of decorative design made for false curls! If someone would revive these interesting articles the whole world might be reconciled to present fashions.

The band-boxes found in the antique shops, at country auctions, or at sales of old personal effects are seldom earlier than 1830, and quite often around the 1850 mark. Band-boxes had a tremendous vogue about the middle of the nineteenth century and showed every variety of decoration. Sometimes wallpaper was used as an outer covering, but many of the fine domestic, and nearly all the imported ones, were covered with a specially prepared hat-paper, thinner than wallpaper and decorated in the gayest manner.





Band-boxes, 1820. Metropolitan Museum of Art



Band-boxes and straw marquetry basket and coaster. Collection of Miss Annabel Stetson, Bradwick, Maine

THE QUEST OF THE QUAIN

The charm of a hat shop must have been doubly alluring, when shelf after shelf contained its brilliant array of boxes. The feathers, ribbons and flowers under the covers were not of livelier coloring. Cap-boxes there were, too, of lavenders, grays and ashes of roses, pitched in a quieter key to suit forty-five and fifty, for caps came early in those days.

Of a later date were cap-baskets, made with handles for convenience in traveling. Within my own memory are these picturesque articles. I well remember my Grandmother's caps and cap-baskets; the best cap and the best cap-basket, and the second and the third best cap, and the second and the third best cap-basket. When journeys were undertaken the bonnet and cap trunk was packed first, a serious matter, making necessary much re-arranging. On one such occasion I recall hearing my Grandmother say, a stately figure in cap and kerchief, "My child, blessed be nothing."

There were also turban-boxes, which contained those marvelous head-dresses worn by great grandmothers and great, great grandmothers. These turbans were wondrous affairs, a blending of French Empire with East Indian, producing a charmingly incongruous effect even in portraits. They were

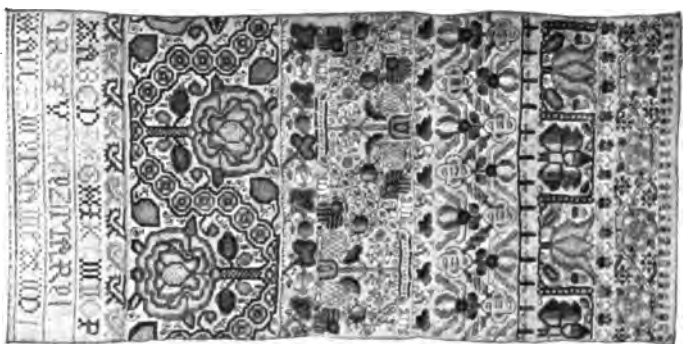
BY-PATHS IN COLLECTING

'destined for house wear, never for the street. How much we have lost in picturesqueness since the day of the gayly adorned band-box!

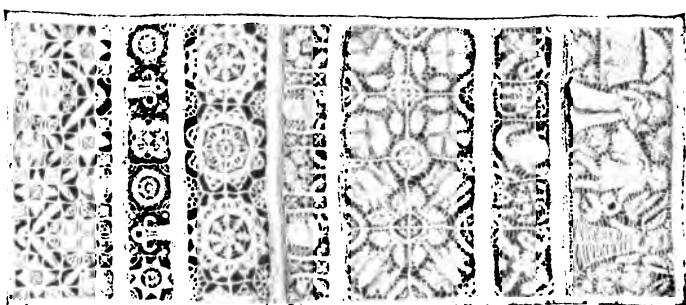
The sampler has not yet become a fad; it has not been made a feature at Colonial loan exhibitions; it does not figure as an important item in auction catalogues. Classed with feather flowers and worsted wreaths, it was for many years mildly ridiculed or completely ignored.

Yet sampler gathering offers a delightful field. To the collectors, who are weary for the nonce of their old china, and to whom old mahogany is no longer an absorbing theme, the sampler quest is recommended as opening pastures new. Nor will the keen pleasure of pursuit be dulled by finding the supply over-abundant. The time has passed when every New England parlor boasted its framed bit of variegated needlework. The green alphabets, the orange birds, and the impossible houses were of the stuff of which both moth and rust do corrupt. The moral maxims, wrought by Eliza, aged eight, or Patience aged nine, have, in many families, become merely tradition. Other specimens of infant piety, escaping the ravages of time, have been relegated to the attic, together with other cast-off things.

Like all forms of needlework, the sampler has an



Embroidered in 1680



Rare "cut work"



Jacobean emblems

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ancient and honorable history. In 1498 the English poet Skelton mentions "the sampler to sewe on and the laces to embroide" and later in an inventory of Edward VI is recorded, "Item: Sampler of set of patterns worked on Normandy canvas, with green and black silks."

The original sampler was not the handiwork of infant prodigies, but of women skilled with the needle. Upon bands of fine linen were worked the various stitches needed for reference in making the intricate embroideries of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The early samplers served the purpose of pattern books and were dearly prized by their owners. In shape they were of unusual length, the looms of the period producing only narrow breadths. All the stitches known to the sixteenth century world of needle craft found their way to the pattern bands. Some were worked in the convents and were ecclesiastical in character; others were wrought by royal ladies and displayed the fashionable stitches of the court. There were lace samplers, delicate as cobwebs; cut or drawn samplers, in which the tracery surpassed the finest drawn-work of modern Mexico. The double cut-work, the Italian *punta tagliato*, was introduced into France by Catherine de Medici,

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who found time between royal plotting to execute many pieces of embroidery. Mary Stuart, while an exile at the French court learned the art of *punta tagliato*, and later carried many beautiful specimens into England. Mary Stuart's love for embroidery was not shared by Elizabeth, who cared little for the needle. A later Elizabeth, the daughter of Charles I, was a skilled lace-maker, and it is a tradition that her lace patterns are in existence.

The sampler, as a mere record of stitches, had little decorative value. The different patterns were worked at random, without regard to color or arrangement, and while beautiful in themselves, produced little effect when scattered haphazard over the canvas. It was not until the early part of the seventeenth century that the sampler displayed any unity. At that period the marking of household linen became general, and this practice indirectly had an artistic influence on the pattern bands. The name to be embroidered on the linen was first worked on the sampler. When ornamental alphabets and numerals were added, a more orderly arrangement naturally followed. The various stitches and devices were grouped in rows, and a greater harmony prevailed. The sampler was ceasing to be a mere pattern book, and was becoming a distinct piece of

THE QUEST OF THE QUAINT

needlework. By 1650 it had grown to be a thing of beauty, to which the owner was proud to affix a signature and a date.

Viewed from the standpoint of historical ornament, seventeenth-century samplers present a fascinating study. The designs of many lands were worked in cross-stitch, satin-stitch, chain-stitch, bird's-eye stitch, back-stitch, and the many other stitches of which the needlewomen of the day were masters. According to one old writer the designs were:

“Collected with much praise and Industrie
From scorching Spain and freezing Muscovie,
From fertile France and pleasant Italie,
From Poland, Sweden, Denmark, Germanie,
And some of these rare patterns have been
set
Beyond the bounds of faithless Mahomet.
From spacious China and those kingdoms
East,
And from great Mexico, the Indies West,
Thus are these works far-fetch't and
dearly bought
And consequently good for ladies' thought.”

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A glance at the embroidery of the period reveals the fact that the Orient rather than "scorching Spain" or "freezing Muscovie" was the source of design. Back to the days of the Crusades date the Eastern patterns which were introduced into Christendom by the Crusaders. When Richard the Lion-hearted returned from the Holy Land, he brought with him "tapestry carpets"—the Oriental rugs of the twelfth century—and hung them on the walls of Windsor Castle. The Persian pink and the Arabian rose, which were woven into these hangings, bloomed again in the samplers. The rose had a double significance, and was the favorite flower in the sampler garden.

The presence of the rose needs no explanation, for loyal Jacobite maidens naturally transferred the Stuart emblem to their samplers. The queer little men, found on many specimens, are more difficult to classify, and have long puzzled collectors. Sometimes they are dressed in doublet and hose, sometimes in wigs and long coats. The trophies they bear are numerous, and range from the oak-leaf and acorn to mysterious symbols of Jacobean significance. For more than a century these unique little people flit across the canvas, leaving the sampler world about 1740.

THE QUEST OF THE QUAIN

The sampler of long and narrow dimensions continued to be the accepted form until early in the eighteenth century. At that time the spinning of linen in wider breadths made possible different proportions. The introduction of a border added a new element, and gave rise to a type of sampler unknown in the seventeenth century. This border, at first insignificant, gradually assumed the character of a frame enclosing a picture in cross-stitch. Instead of ornamental rows of embroidery—flowers, birds, and heraldic devices were worked at intervals over the surface of the linen. The inscription which had formerly been made a part of the design was now an independent feature, and was sometimes of great length.

Samplers are divided into two general classes, the year 1700 approximating the line of separation. Row samplers comprise the first class; border samplers the second. The former belong to the seventeenth century; the latter to the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The row samplers were far more beautiful, with their subdued color scheme and their semi-Oriental designs. When the Persian pink and the Arabian rose were abandoned, much of the charm of canvas and cross-stitch vanished.

Strange and wonderful flowers grew under the

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sampler-needle. Birds of remarkable plumage, animals of fierce and terrible mien, castles with flying buttresses—all these and many more—were the sampler decorations of the early “border” period.

As the eighteenth century progressed the sampler ceased to be the work of trained needlewomen, and became the exponent of youthful industry and skill.

Sometimes the schoolmistress is mentioned on the sampler. One old canvas reads:

“Hannah Canting is my Name
And with my Nedel I wrote the same
And Judith Hayle is my Dame.”

Passages from the Scripture, and original verses setting forth the shortness of life and the evil of worldly living were part of the sampler task. In marked contrast to the gay birds and flowers were these somber sentiments. One stanza reads:

“And now my soul another year
Of my short life is past,
I cannot long continue here
And this may be my last.”

Seven years old was the little maid who stitched

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that, and nine the maker of the sampler bearing these lines:

“Gay dainty flowers go simply to decay
Poor wretched life’s short portions flies away.
We eat, we drink, we sleep, but lo anon
Old age steals on us never thought upon.”

In 1720 Margaret Burnell worked on her canvas:

“Our life is nothing but a winter’s day
Some only breake their fast and so away;
Others stay dinner and apart full fed
The deeper age but sups and goes to bed,
Hee’s most in debt, that lingers out the day,
Who dies betimes, has less and less to pay.”

Many of the inscriptions are so absurd that it is hard to realize that they were worked in seriousness.

Elizabeth Matron, in 1718, stitched the following rhymed fantasy:

“You ask me why I love, go ask the glorious
son, why it threw the world doeth run, ask time and
fate the reason why it flow, ask damask rose, why

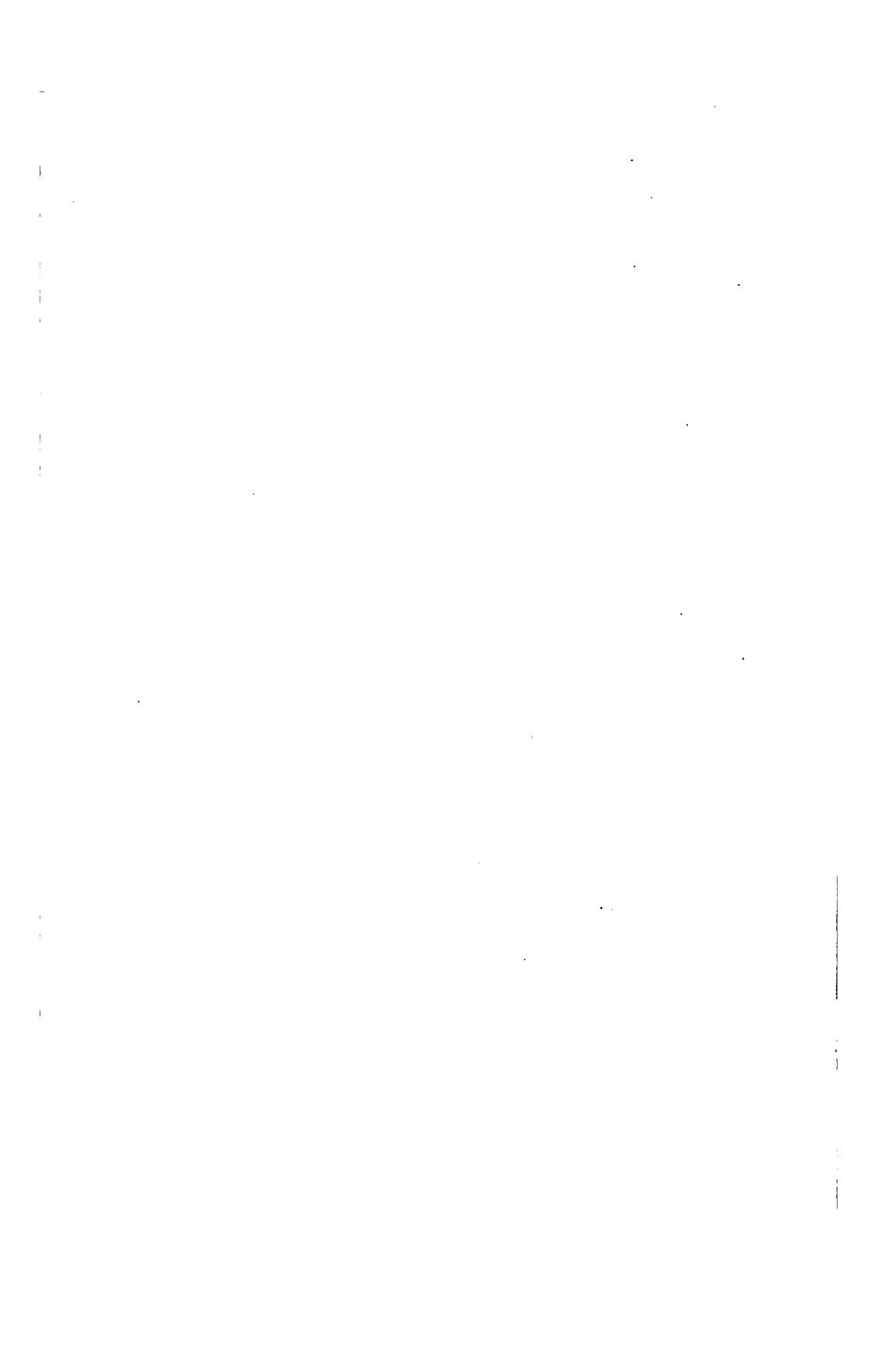
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so full they blow—By this you see what care my Parents took of me. Elizabeth Matron is my name and with my nedell I rought the sane, and if my judgment had been better I would have mended every letter. And she that is wise in her time will rise, she that will eat her breakfast in her bed and spend all the morning in dressing her head; and eat at dinner like a maiden bride. God in his mercy may do much to save her, but what a case is he in, that must have her. Elizabeth Matron. The sun set, the shadows fly the good consume and the man he dies.”

Poor little Elizabeth! Many a time her needle must have faltered over the sermon in cross-stitch, and she must have longed to emulate the young woman whom she held up in such awful warning.

A more cheerful note is struck by Ann Young, who made an acrostic out of her name to add to her sampler.

“A virgin that’s Industrious, Merits Praise
Nature she Imitates in Various Ways.
Now forms the Pink, now gives the Rose its blaze,
Young Buds she folds in Tender Leaves of green
Omits no shade to beautify her Scene.
Upon the Canvas, see the Letters rise





Early nineteenth century, English



Early nineteenth century, American

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Neatly they shine with intermingled Dies
Glide into Words and strike us with surprise."

It would be pleasant to think that the houses seen on old samplers indicated the manner of building in which the makers lived, but the architecture of sampler land cannot be taken seriously. When everything else is worked with a fairly firm hand, the houses are extremely crude and suggest the drawings that children make on their slates. Not that all the dwellings are alike. Some roofs are pointed and some are straight and some have tall battlements, flanked by lions, one of the latter type being seen in a little German sampler, but all show the same checker-board effect of doors and windows, and the same remarkable chimneys. Next to the borders the strongest similarity between England and American samplers is shown in the houses. The costumes differ widely, the alphabets show a greater variety than would seem possible on first thought, the canvases are not alike, but the queer attempts at house-making are one and the same.

Betsy Adams worked an imposing structure into her canvas, but it has the same outlines of many an English sampler house. The large birds resting on small trees have an English look, but the general

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arrangement of the other decorations is quite American. The border is very attractive, and exhibits a bold treatment of the tree of life inclosed by a narrow Greek fret. A point worthy of note about this sampler is, that the main border extends on three sides of the sampler only. A special and more primitive border is worked across the bottom. The tree of life is embroidered with true Oriental feeling, the Persian scheme of color emphasizing the effect.

“Time has Wings and swiftly flies
Youth and Beauty fade away
Virtue is the only Prize
Whose sacred Joys shall neer Decay.”

Below is her name. “Wrought by Betsy Adams in the ninth year of her age.” Patient little Betsy! A year of your young life is represented in this quaint thing! A stirring year it was, too, in American history—1773—and perhaps the little sampler worker, who was John Adams’ cousin, and lived in the same town, heard many a heated discussion as she carefully cross-stitched the green birds and the fine blue house.

It is to be hoped that sampler collecting in this



Betsy Adams' sampler, 1773. Collection of the author

THE QUEST OF THE QUAINT

country will become a fad before it is too late. There is still time to save many old specimens. The existence of a sampler made by Rose Standish proves that this form of needlework was known in the Colonies at an early date. "En samples" are mentioned in diaries and letters of the late seventeenth century, and that they were a very common product of the eighteenth century is placed beyond question.

A volume devoted to American specimens, following in a general way the plan adopted by Mr. Huish in his extensive English treatise, would be a valuable contribution to Coloniana. The charm and importance of such a book can hardly be overestimated, for it would be more than a mere record on canvas and cross-stitch. As some of the old Japanese brocades depict the valor of Japan's great warriors, so the old American samplers display the patience and skill of the Colonial maids and matrons.

Sampler collecting naturally begins with the handiwork of one's own great-grandmother, if one possess a great-grandmother and the sampler be extant. From this point, sampler gathering practically has no limits and is bounded by no geographical lines. There are Continental samplers, Oriental samplers, Mexican samplers, samplers worked by

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the early Indian tribes, and samplers which are so old and so baffling in design that they cannot be classified.

About the time that worsted stags and dogs came in, samplers went out. It was the day of embroidered ottomans and firescreens, and pre-eminently the day of tidies. Possibly the time will come when these things will be sufficiently "antique" to be interesting. A thousand years could not make them less ugly. They must rank with haircloth furniture, marble-top tables, wax flowers, feather wreaths, and plush albums—a one-time phase of our art existence.

The American collector will count himself fortunate to find any samplers of pre-Revolutionary origin. Those belonging to the late eighteenth century are rare and those of the first decade of the nineteenth century are not common. The most numerous are of the 1830 period when the gentle art of cross stitching particularly flourished. Mortuary pieces belong to this day. Weeping willows, urns and tombstones decorate these mournful tributes to departed friends, many of which still hang upon the walls of New England parlors. They are far more solemn than the samplers. An occasional "mourning piece" is an interesting addition to a col-

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lection. A family tree in needlework is a real prize, and the cross-stitch picture, worked solid in imitation of tapestry is a treasure trove.

The samplers once secured, the question next arises how to take care of the collection. Sunlight fades, dust mars, dampness ruins. The quaint old pieces cannot be placed on a shelf and left there as can pewter, copper and brass. They require far more care than china, for, while they cannot break they are not proof against disaster.

Choice specimens should be framed and hung where the light is even. They should never be exposed to bright sunlight, nor placed where they will absorb moisture. Dampness is even more fatal than sunshine, for it causes mildew and other blemishes. A portfolio is a convenient storing place for a dozen or more, each sampler mounted on a heavy board of a tone harmonious with the canvas. A light coffee color is effective with some samples, others look better against an ivory tone. A few are attractive on gray mats.

In the present revival of old stitches, the cross has had its share of recognition, but it has been put to more modern and, possibly, more practical uses than the making of samplers. It is difficult to imagine a modern child working away on a sampler. One

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is tempted to say that it would be a cross child stitching—a very cross child and very poor stitching.

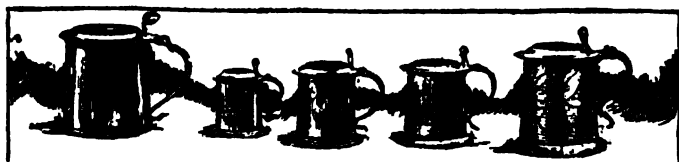
It is hard to fancy Dorothy or Gladys laboring over the verse that little Sally Field worked in 1825.

“How happy is the lovely child
Of manners gentle, temper mild,
Who learns each useful pretty art,
Sure pleasure to her friends impart.
'Tis this, my Parents! sweetens toil,
And my reward is in thy smile.”





Interior in the Gilman Manse, showing old pewter, glass, powder horn, and brass candlesticks



CHAPTER XX

THE SHEEN OF OLD PEWTER

WHEN, in 1750, Ebenezer Coffin of "The Crown and Beehive," Cornhill, Boston, imported fifteen barrels of pewter dishes, he did not foresee that a day would come when these plates and platters, porringers and drinking-cups would be worth as many dollars as they were then worth shillings. Ebenezer Coffin thought little about the matter, except to plan to rid himself of the fifteen barrels, and to this end he composed a long advertisement that appeared next month in *The Post Boy*, in which his wares were offered "very Cheap for Cash or Short Credit."

Cornhill in those days was full of picturesque signs, and none was more so than the said Coffin's. A green beehive suggested the industry of the shop-keeper, and a huge gilded crown proclaimed the fact

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that he was a loyal subject of his Majesty, King George II. Opposite was "The Basket of Lemons," and a few doors below, "The Blue Glove," where, contrary to expectation, "Fine Molasses in all its Original Purity" was sold.

Strange combinations were found within these Colonial salesrooms. Harbottle Dorr, at "The Sheaf of Wheat" dealt in pewter spoons and Manchester ruffles; Increase Paddock, at "The Golden Cock" in snuff-boxes and India china; while Desire Todd and Elizabeth Purcell furnished their patrons with quill pens and London bonnets, "likewise Bohea Tea (with gossip) each day at Four."

Women were merchants in the old Cornhill days. Mary Jackson, at the sign of "The Tankard," had at one time the largest pewtering establishment in Boston, and was famous for her porringers. She also supplied her fellow-moulders with French and English models. While many of the dishes used by the Colonists were imported, quantities were made in this country, as the old advertisements testify. There were three grades of this metal: *common or ley*, consisting of four parts tin and one part lead; *trifle*, with eighty-three parts tin and seventeen parts antimony; and *plate pewter*, having one hundred parts tin, eight parts antimony, two parts bismuth

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and two parts copper. These were the standard formulas, but they were varied as a harder or softer composition was desired. Lead was added to such an extent by some of the English makers that a law was passed restricting the per cent. of this alloy.

Pewter played a prominent part in Colonial households. In many homes it was the only tableware, and there was scarcely an important event that was not connected with it. Caudle-cups were used at christenings; wedding guests toasted the bride from high tankards; and the baked meats at funerals were served on the great round chargers. It was the age of pewter, and for more than a century it was supreme. After the Revolution it lost its prestige, and slowly gave place to English crockery. China tea-sets had long been in possession of the wealthy, but they were reserved for grand occasions, and were carefully guarded between times, behind locked doors of sideboards and corner cupboards. English potters at that time sent over the dark blue ware that was destined to make Staffordshire famous, and the old pewter dishes were forced to the wall. The poorer classes still clung to the plates and basins, but the day of the gray metal was over. As late as 1840 teapots were made in small numbers in this country and abroad, but they had lost their grace-

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ful shapes, and resembled closely the common tin ones seen to-day in New England farm-houses. The pewter age was ended.

Then came long years of neglect. Gradually the once precious articles were banished to the garret, or ignominiously sold to peddlers, together with rags and old rubber. Junk-shops claimed many charming pieces, and scores of quaint designs were ruthlessly melted for the sake of the lead.

But time has again turned the scales in favor of the old dishes, and they now come forth in triumph—a little bent, perhaps, and black with dust, but fascinating to the collector.

The study of this Colonial metal is a delightful one, the hall-marks alone offering a wide field. As a hobby, pewter-collecting has few equals. Not only are the old pieces interesting as representing manners and customs of another century, but the shapes are invariably good and exceedingly decorative. Then pewter-hunting is second only to "china-hunting" in unique experiences. What characters and places are conjured up by the old plates and platters,—hours spent in New England attics; long drives through picturesque villages, with no reward, perhaps, save a broken candlestick or a bottomless teapot! What hosts of memories surround every arti-



Russian, Dutch and East Indian brass and copper. Studio of
Mrs. Edith W. Sheridan, Chicago



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cle, making a collection a never-ending source of pleasure and amusement!

Britannia and early American plate are sometimes bought by the unwary, particularly at auctions, where every lead-colored substance, including blocked tin, masquerades as genuine old pewter. These pretenders are attractive enough to be judged on their own merits, and do not need to pose as something else to find admirers. Britannia at the time of its invention was considered a great improvement on pewter, and the plated ware was another step in the evolution of table metals. Britannia is a comparatively hard composition, and should never mislead the collector, while the ornate shapes of the American plate are widely different from the strong, simple designs of the Colonial period.

A chapter might be written on pewter lamps alone. First, after candles, the whale-oil, then the fluid, next the astral, and so on down to modern days and modern lamps.

Porringers are perhaps the most attractive things in a collection; they belong so completely to another day and generation. The soft luster of some of these quaint little dishes is not equaled by anything else in pewter. And this suggests a point worthy of notice in the study of this metal, and that is

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color. Two pieces are seldom of the same tone. Teapots found under the eaves, platters which served to carry corn meal to the chickens have a leaden aspect, relieved by black spots, and firmly defy all amateur scouring. Then if they are sent to a metal worker and go through a "buffing" process, they return looking like new tin, with a hard brilliancy which only added years can subdue. On the other hand, the carefully treasured pieces show a beautiful mellow sheen, and need not fear the proximity of old silver nor Sheffield plate.

For beauty of color, workmanship and design, Paul Revere pieces rank first among pewter articles made in America. The charm of the old porringers, spoons, tankards and tea services marked "P. R." is very great. No royal initials, be they "G. R." or "V. R.," can approach them in interest. Paul Revere, silversmith, pewterer, engraver, patriot and many other things, might well be made the patron saint of pewter collectors and lantern makers.

Pewter-collecting is a gentle madness, for which more pewter is the only cure. This desire is heightened by the fact that it is only in masses that pewter has any decorative quality. Herein lies the chief difference between it and other metals. A

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good piece of copper or brass will instantly adapt itself to an artistic room, provided the color scheme be in harmony with the tones of the metal; but one pewter article, no matter how fine, will throw out of line a lot of other equally desirable things, and at the same time have no particular effectiveness of its own. It makes such rigid demands that it is not destined to be very popular, for which pewter-lovers are duly grateful.

Narrow shelves lined with plates and platters form the only consistent background for tankards, porringers, flagons, and caudle-cups. China and pewter seldom combine well. The dull gray is not on friendly terms with blue, and while it is more harmonious with green, pink, and mulberry, it loses rather than gains by being placed near its china contemporaries.

The surroundings of these metal dishes should be carefully thought out. It is not absolutely essential to build the room for the collection, but it is well to give the subject consideration. With a true Colonial setting the old pewter has great possibilities.

To many people the marks on English pewter are a sealed book. A few oft-occurring devices, such as the rose, the crown, and the lion, need little explana-

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tion, but most of the private stamps—the individual imprints of the makers—are baffling in the extreme.

Of these private stamps, or touch marks, as they were called, no adequate key has been compiled. Volumes have been written about old silver, but pewter has had few historians.

The silversmith and the pewterer did not belong to the same class. One was an artist, the other a craftsman. The pewterer practiced a trade; the silversmith ranked with the painter and the sculptor. The work of the smith was numbered, dated, signed, stamped with the head of the reigning sovereign, and marked with the arms of the city. These imprints were duly recorded and carefully preserved. To-day these various devices may be deciphered by any one who cares to study the complicated tables of date letters, initials, sovereign heads, and city arms.

The work of the pewterer was seldom numbered and rarely dated. Three stamps were invariably used and registered on pewter tablets or touch-plates. Few of these tablets have survived the vicissitudes of time, and for this reason some of the old stamps rival Chinese puzzles. Many of the touch plates were discarded as new craftsmen entered the field; others were melted down for the sake of



English porringers



Scotch tappit-hen



Paul Revere spoons

Collection of Leopold P. H. Fisher, Esq.

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the pewter, and worked up into new forms.

The great London fire destroyed the effects of the London Guild, or Company of Pewterers, and among valuable records, their earliest touch plates were lost. English pewter ante-dating the fire is very scarce, and American collectors need not be disturbed at the lack of information regarding the marks of the few pieces extant. These rare specimens are in English museums, and are more valuable than contemporary articles of silver.

The London company was the largest of its day, and was patterned on the Paris guild, which had been in existence for several centuries. Among English pewterers, those of London ranked first and those of York second. Scotch metal-workers, in some respects, surpassed their English brethren, and the guild of Edinburgh was almost as famous as the great London company.

The rules and regulations of these three guilds—London, York, and Edinburgh—were much alike, and were very binding. All pewter vessels, whether for secular or religious usage, were weighed and assayed. Two grades of the metal were permitted—fine and common; the latter containing not more than one-fifth of lead. Each piece was stamped with a license mark, which showed that it was of

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standard weight and quality, a guild mark which identified the city, and a private mark which indicated the maker. An inspector was appointed by the crown to confiscate all pieces that failed to conform to the rules of the guild. The history of these pewter companies is extremely interesting, and closely allied to that of the other great industrial guilds of England and Scotland.

The rose with a crown is the oldest English stamp. It is the original license mark granted by the king, and during the sixteenth century was seen on all pewter articles. Later it was adopted by the London company as its distinctive mark. Some of the Continental guilds used the rose as a license stamp, notably those of Belgium and Denmark. The rose found on Belgian pewter contains a small shield with a lion rampant. The English mark is unmistakable, resembling what is now termed the Tudor rose. In Scotland, the thistle was combined with the crown, and this fact makes Scotch pewter easy of identification.

Mr. Engleby Wood, the English connoisseur, has compiled a list of English, Scotch, and Continental marks which will be found of great assistance to collectors on both sides of the water. As many of these are private stamps, his research along this line

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represents the work of years. His notes are given below in his own words. It was my pleasure to read them in pencil form:

"The Edinburgh company had, from time to time, different stamps; the first, about 1600, being a figure like a St. Andrew's cross, with initials on either side; the second simply a castle; the third a variation of the castle, with the addition of initials and dates. This stamp runs from 1610-1764 and onwards, varying slightly in character. A thistle with the word 'Edinburgh' underneath is another form; also a large thistle with the contraction 'Ed' underneath.

"Among the Glasgow stamps are the city arms: A tree with a fish holding a ring in its mouth, with or without initials, all in a small shield."

The English touch marks are as follows:

"Samuel Jackson, a lamp and flag with the letters 'S. J.' on either side, all within a beaded circle of the size of a threepenny piece.

"Robert Lucas, a blazing star, with the letters 'R. L.' on either side, all within a beaded oval.

"Thomas Dickinson, a griffin's head couped on a wreath, and with a crown above and the letters 'T. D.' all within a beaded circle the size of a threepenny piece.

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"Laurence Dyer, a shield with a stiff leather manteling and charged with three anchors placed two and one, all in a plain oval, above which are two labels, one over the other, bearing the words 'Londoni' and 'L. Dyer.'

"Ralph March, a bird and 'R. M.' in a beaded circle less than a threepenny piece.

"Nicholas Kelk, a hand grasping a rose and the initials 'N. K.'

"Francis Lea, three stamps, all bearing a pomegranate, the first a medium-sized oval with stiff leaf or feather manteling on either side; above appears the name 'Fra Lea.' The two other marks are very small, and one circular with the pomegranate in the center and 'F. L.' on either side; the other smaller still, with the same device and initials. Each of these smaller stamps has a beaded rim, sometimes within a circle.

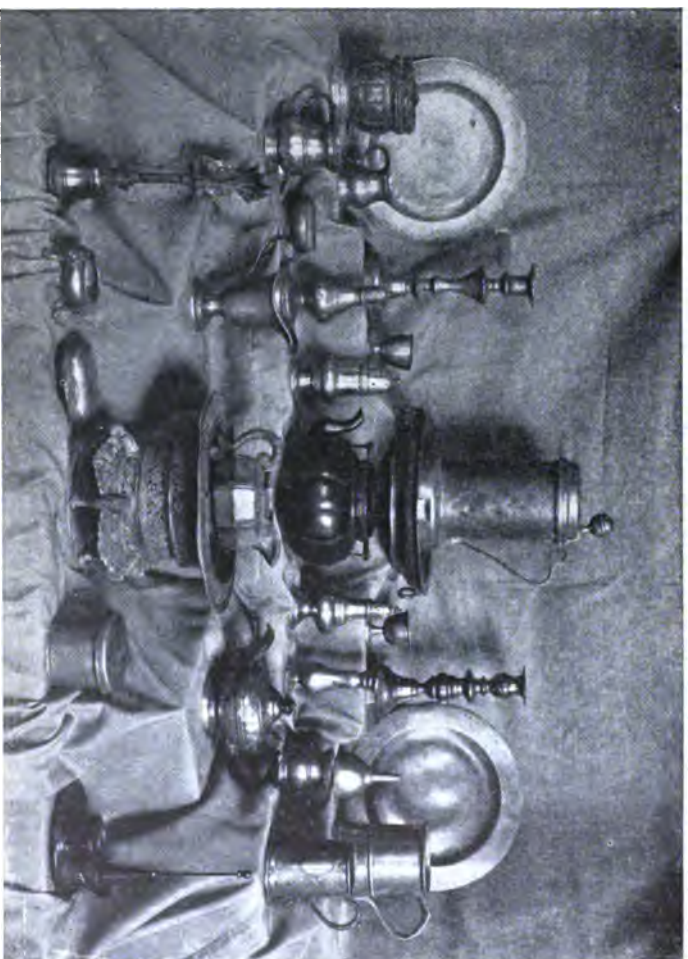
"Thomas Stone, a crowned portcullis with the letters 'T. S.' on either side, all within a beaded circle about the size of a sixpence."

Of foreign guild marks, four are given:

"Bruges, a crowned Gothic 'B.'

"Antwerp, an ant.

"Ghent, a figure of St. Michael set in a small circle, the maker's name running around the top



Rare collection of old pewter and brass, comprising tankards, chargers, braziers, salt cellars and beakers

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of a circle. Pewter thus marked is valuable.

"Brussels, an angel flying, the maker's name being placed as at Ghent."

Some of these marks are found on the rarer specimens in American collections, and Mr. Wood's notes may be of service in helping to place the city and the maker.

The most common stamp seen in this country is the rose, and this imprint is often clear-cut while the remaining marks are nearly obliterated. A strong glass will usually reveal enough of the guild mark to determine the city, which is as far as some collectors care to fathom. Many lovers of pewter care little about the marks. Others, wish to bring the same microscopic study to their old pewter that collectors of silver do to their Queen Anne teapots and George III punch-ladles. Others still, and these are the doubting Thomases among collectors, look with suspicion upon a fine array of marks. Being burdened with too much knowledge, they have become very cautious. They know the tricks and manners of the trade—the modern trade alas!—and that often the shining pewter basin or tankard beautifully stamped with marks, can boast of no honorable lineage. The new basin or tankard does not always shine; sometimes it is dull and bent, and car-

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ries an air of respectability that deceives all but the very knowing.

For a long time pewter-lovers were happy in the delusion that their favorite metal could not be reproduced in the old forms. They cheerfully admitted that collectors of brass and copper could be deceived. Were there not men in New York who fashioned half the "old" Russian pieces in the Ghetto? But pewter—old pewter—was very different. There was bogus Colonial furniture, and there might be bogus blue Staffordshire—but not bogus pewter!

It is painful to chronicle, but unfortunately true, that there is a great deal of sham pewter for sale. And new pewter is much more difficult to detect than new copper and brass. The latter metals are usually spun. To hammer out the pieces by hand after the manner of the Russian peasant would make them too expensive for the Ghetto. As spun metals in no wise resemble those that are hammered, the would-be-purchaser need not be puzzled long by the wares set forth for his approval. There is also the soldering, which is not ancient of days.

But new pewter is made precisely as the old, and is so clever a representation that it has justly aroused the wrath of collectors. Is nothing safe from the

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hand of the imitator? Must plain, honest plebeian pewter, marks and all, fall under the ban? There is one consolation to the enthusiast and that is that old pewter has never been sufficiently popular to make the new pewter industry very lucrative. Pewter is caviar to the general.

Porringers have been more extensively reproduced than any other pewter article. Doubtless for the reason that their attractive shape appeals to many people who are not ardent admirers of the metal. When you buy porringers, unless you have grown gray in the pursuit for pewter, it is well to take some one with you who has mastered all the degrees. Dark with guile, but not age, are the new, old porringers and dented with many a scar; and if you do not know, you will buy them joyfully, hang them up by their pretty handles, and be much elated—until the initiated one comes along. The enthusiastic collector will not be daunted by a few experiences like this. He will count them as necessary mile-stones along the pewter path.

Once upon a time, the men who worked in pewter produced designs that equaled those of the silver-smiths. The bleakers, flagons, tankards, loving-cups, and porringers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, whether of silver or pewter, were beauti-

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ful specimens of handicraft. Few examples of sixteenth-century pewter are in existence; those of the seventeenth-century are extremely rare. Eighteenth-century pieces and those of the early nineteenth form the major portion of private collections both in this country and abroad.

The subject of church pewter opens a pleasant field and a comparatively new one in America. Scotch pewterers excelled in the making of ecclesiastical vessels, and many of these have been preserved in the public and private collections of England and Scotland. Some of the old communion services are still in use in rural Scotland, where old customs have never given place to new ones.

Aside from the characteristic church pieces there were several secular articles which were peculiarly Scotch. The *quaich* and the *tappit-hen* were two. The quaich was a drinking-cup, and the tappit-hen a tankard of angular and canny aspect. Three tappit-hens of varying sizes constituted a set. These Scotch fowls are now very rare, and one confers distinction on an entire collection.

Not common in America are any of these Scotch pieces—religious or otherwise. There are beautiful old English communion services in this country, but they are not the property of individuals. In

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King's Chapel, Boston, is still preserved the pewter altar set of Colonial days, and a similar service is among the valued relics of the old North Church. In a few New England towns the old pewter communion-cups are in use but, like sounding-boards and long sermons, they belong to another day. In a quiet village among the Berkshire hills, two high communion-cups are used every Sunday. But they hold prim bouquets of flowers cut from a dear old-time garden. Few visitors to the little church realize the significance of these simple vases, nor that their age is more than a hundred years.

New England villages are full of interest to the pewter-lover. Nearly every farmhouse contains at least a platter or a teapot. Porringers too, are apt to lurk on high cupboard shelves, and sometimes more unusual pieces, such as bowls, and pitchers. When these old metal dishes have been carefully kept they are treasures trove. Many years of polishing have lent a luster which is beautiful beyond description. Few farmhouse pieces have received this ideal treatment. If they have, they do not change hands for a consideration in silver. Most of the pewter that one gathers up in New England pilgrimages is leaden with neglect. The cleaning of these dishes forms the dark chapter of pewter-

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collecting, upon which even the enthusiastic do not care to dwell. Buffing is a sad compromise, since it gives a polish utterly foreign to the metal. Buffed copper and brass grow mellow in a few months, but buffed pewter never loses its cold glitter. And one glittering teapot will spoil a whole shelf of soft, gray beauties.

Many people find pewter lacking in color, preferring the warmer tones of copper and brass. To such as these, candlesticks and kettles made a special appeal. The variety made possible by a candle collection needs little emphasis, while the practical qualities of such an assortment are self-evident. Electricity can never take away from the beauty and charm of candlelight. The poetry of a lighted taper is one of the few things that this modern, work-a-day world does not alter.

The coziness and cheer of all kettles are sufficient excuse for their existence, if any excuse were needed. English and Dutch brass, and Russian copper will form the bulk of a collection, including other metal utensils closely related to kettles. Chinese and East Indian metals will occasionally fascinate. Pierced wedding balls of brass, perforated lanterns of copper, and lamps and candlesticks of bell metal should have place in a large collection, also Spanish

THE SHEEN OF OLD PEWTER

braziers and other things from the land of castanets. Collecting old metals leads to many countries, and there are really no limits except those of money, time and space, a terrible and inseparable trio.

Naturally the collector of old brass will be interested in andirons. Indeed the fireplace may be made the keystone of a metal collection; brass andirons on the hearth, a copper kettle swinging from the crane, and a row of candlesticks on the mantel. As with all old things the setting counts fully half. To begin with a pair of fire-dogs or even snuffers and tray may mean the building of a Colonial fireplace, or possibly the buying of an old house. Nor is the "antique" question settled with the furnishing of the house. No Colonial dwelling old or new is complete without an old-fashioned garden, and no garden without a sundial. Sometimes the dial is responsible for the garden; sometimes the garden for the dial.





CHAPTER XXI

HOURL-GLASS AND SUN-DIAL

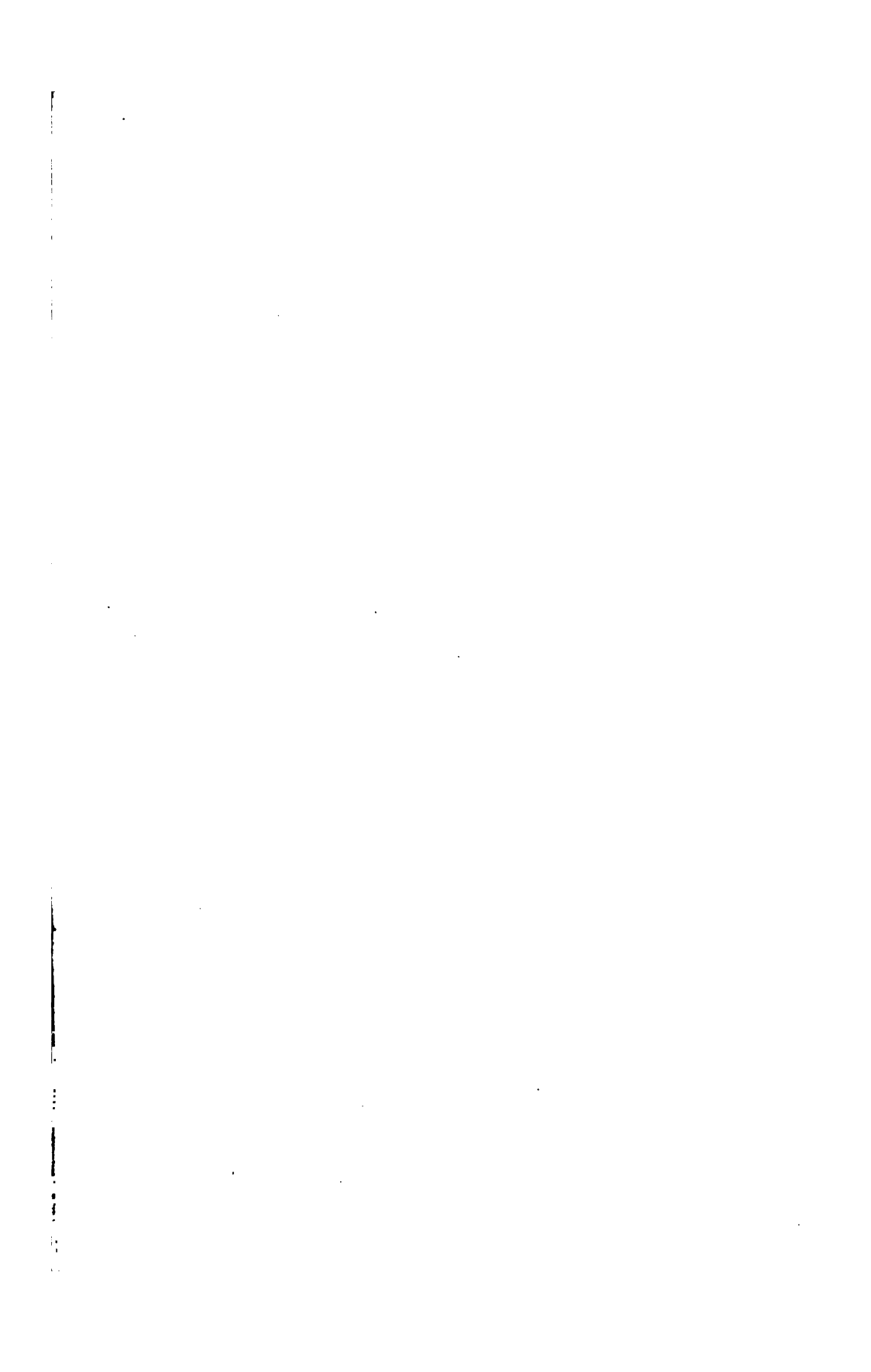
IN a neglected corner of western Massachusetts, far from the beaten paths of summer travel, stands an old brick house, built more than a century ago. Within, is desolation, summer and winter; without, on a June day, the old garden is a fair spot indeed. Once there were prim beds of flowers and precise rows of box. Now the flowers and weeds grow in a tangled riot—larkspur, bleeding-hearts, poppies, and petunias—a mixture never planned by mortal gardener. Cinnamon roses partly cover the walk, and thrust pink heads through the lattice gate. Baltimore Belles and Crimson Ramblers grow as they seldom do under cultivation. Lilac bushes and flowering quince vie with each other in color and fragrance. But the peonies are the chief glory of



The rose-covered shelter



With a sun-dial the background counts half In a New England garden



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the old garden. The gentle mistress of the house planted them long ago; then they bloomed in orderly divisions of pink, white, and deep red. Now they defy all boundary lines and grow everywhere, great masses of gorgeous color. No "chrysanthemum show" could surpass these neglected peony beds. The high wall shuts them from the street, and only the birds and an occasional visitor enjoy their loveliness.

In the deepest shrubbery of the garden is a sundial. When the sunlight penetrates the tangle of foliage, it shows a motto cut deep in the metal.

"Moments pass like shadows."

Up in the attic of the old house is another ancient time-keeper—a battered hour-glass. Covered with dust and cobwebs, it might easily be overlooked in the medley of broken-down articles, which have long found shelter beneath the eaves. Heaped on the floor are portions of old spinning-wheels, dilapidated foot-stoves, warming-pans, candle-moulds, and rusty lanterns. In a corner are piles of musty hymn-books, sermons in manuscript, and early magazines of fashion. The attic contains the accumulation of years. Bunches of pennyroyal and lavender hang from the rafters, but their fragrance is gone, and they crumble at a touch. Very remote from the

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outside world are the old attic, with its dusty, cobwebby contents, and the old garden, with its neglected weeds and flowers.

Few people in the town know anything about the hour-glass or the sun-dial. The house has long borne the reputation of being haunted, and is seldom visited. The dial is so concealed by shrubbery that its existence is almost forgotten. Stem-winders and alarm-clocks are more in tune with the life of the town to-day. The words of John Dickman, who wrote in 1728 that "the art of dialling is one that every man should scorn to leave unlearned," would have little meaning in the ears of the townfolk. Doubtless many people outside of quiet Dorset never heard of John Dickman nor his book, "The Science of Dialling, Newly set Forth," published by Thomas Crupp. The little volume is so mathematical that it does not invite close companionship. A later writer, Charles Leadbetter, deploras the methods of Master Dickman and others of his class, saying in a quaint preface:

"Seeing the Business of Dialing, if Mechanically considered, is of itself a thing so natural and easy, one would wonder after so much learned Bustle as the Mathematicians have made about it, that they should have more perplexed the Knowledge of that

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useful and entertaining Art amongst the Generality of Mankind. The different Ways in which these Gentlemen have hitherto chose the World should see the useful Subject handled, would certainly have been Right and Proper and liable to no Exception, if all Men were Mathematicians. But how Few are Such."

How few indeed!

Part of the Leadbetter title-page reads:

"Mechanick Dialing; or, The New Art of Shadows freed from the Many Obscurities, superfluities, and Errors of other Writers upon the Subject. The Whole laid down after so Plain a Method that any Person (tho' a Stranger to the Art) with a pair of Compasses and Common Ruler only May make a dial upon any Plane for any place in the World (as well as those who have attained to the greatest Knowledge and Perfection in the Mathematics). A Work not only useful for Artificers, but very entertaining for Gentlemen and those Students of the Universities that would understand dialing without the Fatigue of going through a course of Mathematics. Printed from G. Pearch at No. 12 in Cheapside. 1760."

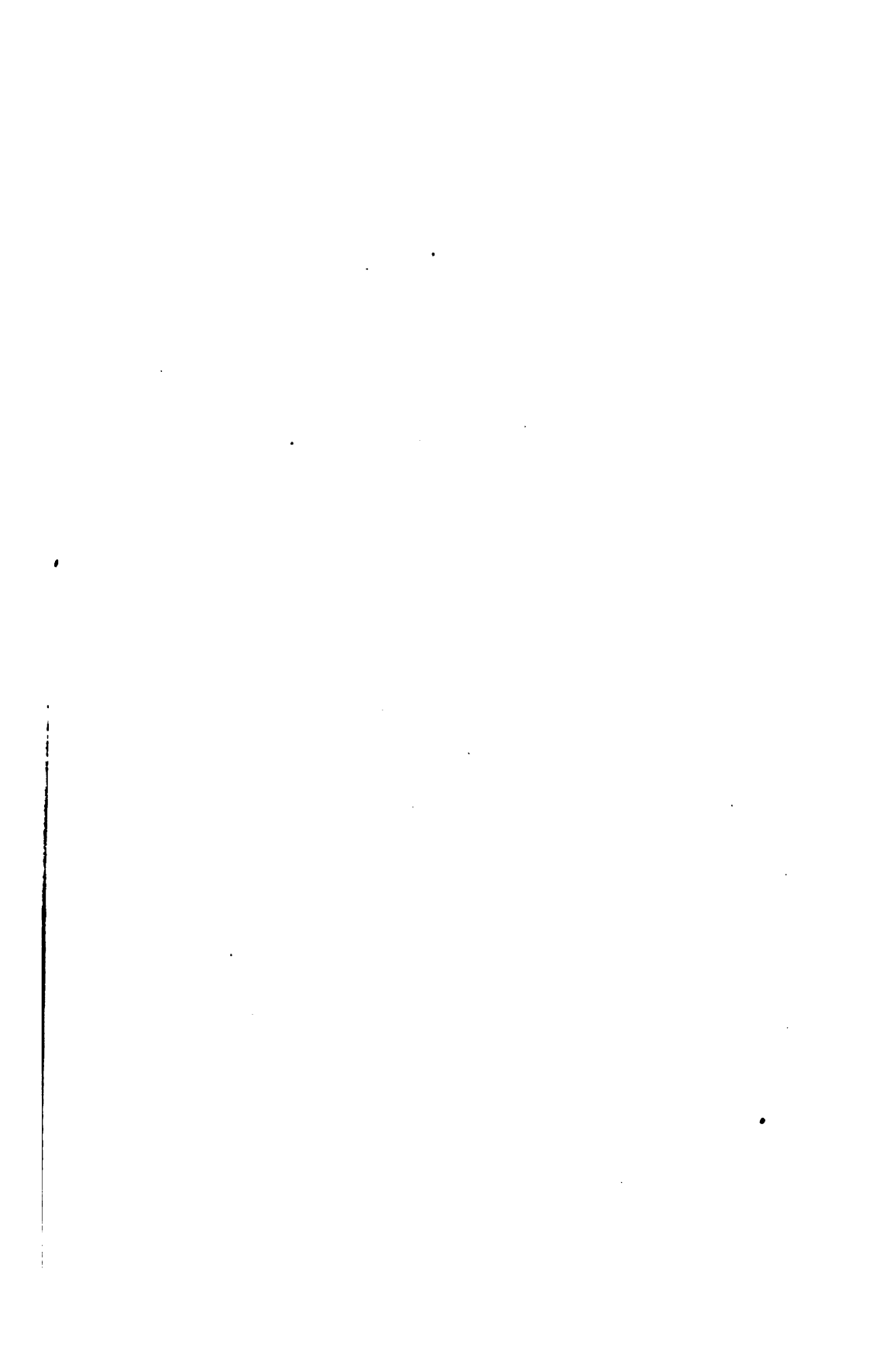
Although Master Leadbetter clothes his subject in simpler language than some of his predecessors, one's

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thinking-cap should be well in place to understand the lengthy directions for making a horizontal-dial, a vertical-dial, a ceiling-dial, a window-dial, a facet-dial, a globe-dial, a cross-dial, and a nocturnal-dial. Many people will find the subject of shadow-clocks more entertaining when studied against the background of stone walls and rosebushes. Old gardens with dials are more interesting than old books about dials.

To those who are mathematically inclined it may be said that "Dialing, sometimes called gnomonics, is a branch of applied mathematics which treats of the construction of sun-dials, that is, of those instruments, either fixed or portable, which determine the divisions of day by the motion of the shadow of some object on which the sun's rays fall. A dial consists of two parts, the stile or gnomon, usually the edge of a plate of metal always made parallel to the earth's axis and pointed towards the north pole, and the dial-plane, which may be made of any hard substance, and on which are marked the directions of the shadow for the several hours of the day."

To those who are historically inclined, it may be said that the earliest mention of the shadow-clock occurs in the Bible, and refers to the dial of Abaz,





Topiary garden, Friar Park, England



Globe dial, Wildernem, Kent

HOUR-GLASS AND SUN-DIAL

king of Judah, who reigned in the eighth century, B. C. . Isaiah xxxvii, 8: "Behold I will bring again the shadow of the degrees which is gone down in the sun-dial of Ahaz, ten Degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down."

Of English shadow-clocks, the one over the door of Kirkdale Church, Rydale, is believed to be one of the oldest. It is in the form of a crude semicircle, and bears an inscription in Saxon: "This is the day's sun-maker at every hour, and Hayward made me and Brand the Priest." There is no date, but the stone-work is attributed to the time of Edward the Confessor. This dial belongs to the vertical type, which was a common one in England for many centuries. When clocks replaced the old vertical dials, a picturesque feature of church-building was lost. Of late years the vertical type has been revived, a notable example being Queen Alexandra's at Sandringham.

From the early part of the sixteenth century until the middle of the eighteenth, the dial was an important and beautiful feature of landscape-gardening. To Charles I and Charles II, are due many of the most famous examples.

Henriette Marie, reared in the artificial atmos-

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phere of the French Court, dearly loved the freedom of her English garden. Its beautiful dial was old then, for it had been erected during the reign of Henry VIII, by Nicholas Kratzer, a native of Munich. Among the matchless portraits painted by Holbein during his visit to England is that of Kratzer, and in its way it is as fine as that of the king. It shows the renowned dialer with the instruments of his craft around him—compasses, rules, plates, and gnomons.

Henriette Marie's own dial is at Holyrood Castle. It is a fine specimen of the "facet" type, and is said to have cost five hundred pounds. The royal arms, the thistle, and the monograms of her majesty and Charles I ornament the supports. It now bears the name of another queen, a Scotch Mary, who died years before the dial was made, but whose tragic history is so associated with Holyrood that the French Mary is forgotten.

The Stuart kings loved costly garden ornaments. Soon after the Restoration, Charles II erected a dial at Whitehall which eclipsed all former attempts in the way of shadow-clocks. Even Nicholas Kratzer had not dreamed of such marvelous cunning. In 1664, Edmund Gunter published "His Majesty's Dial in White Hall Garden"; and in 1669, its

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maker, Francis Hall, wrote a quaint book called "An Explication of the Diall sett up in the King's Garden." The Whitehall of the Stuarts is not the Whitehall of to-day, and it will be useless to look for the king's dial. Long ago its fantastic globes and stars, curious carvings and symbols, disappeared, and he who would ponder upon its ingenious construction must turn to old books and prints.

During the reign of William and Mary the English garden took on a Dutch significance. Sir Christopher Wren designed the beautiful Orangery at Hampton Court, and remodeled the arbors once belonging to Cardinal Wolsey. Queen Mary's Bower, laid out by two famous gardeners, London and Wise, under Wren's direction, is bright every spring with the blossoms of lilac, thorn, and laburnum. At the end of the bower is the sun-dial, which has been a faithful time-marker since 1690.

Dialing inspired the poet as well as the mathematician. The famous "Seven Dials" of St. Giles have been the theme of many verses. Where seven streets intersect, a shaft was erected, on its apex seven dials.

"Where famed St. Gile's ancient limits spread,
An inrailed column rears its lofty head,

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Here to seven streets seven dials count the day,
And from each other catch the circling ray."

When one passes from the verses about dials to the old rhymes and mottoes that were engraved on the dials themselves, a pleasant field is before one.

A garden dial bearing the Tudor rose has these lines cut in the metal:

"A moment—mark how small a space
The dial show upon the face;
Yet waste but one—and you will see
Of how great moment it can be."

Another reads:

"Light rules me
The shadow thee."

An old ceiling-dial, mentioned by Leadbetter, contains this stanza:

"See the little day-star moving,
Life and time are worth improving,
Seize the moments, while they stay,
Seize and use them
Lest you lose them,
And lament the wasted day."

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Many of the rhymes are more cheerful. A favorite line during the eighteenth century, and one which has been used of late for several new dials, is:

"I mark only the sunny hours."

Surely, of all sun-dial mottoes, this is the most attractive.

The hour-glass, no less than the sun-dial, was sometimes engraved with a motto. Except where the mounting was very elaborate, there was space for a few words only. A common sentiment for the hour-glass was a variation of the lines from *Macbeth*:

"Come what may, time and the hour
Run through the longest day."

A verse by John Greenleaf Whittier, written originally for the silver dial of a friend, and now placed on a vertical dial at the entrance of Mount Auburn, reads:

"With warning hand I mark time's rapid flight
From life's glad morning to its solemn night,
Yet through the dear Lord's love I also show
There's light above me by the shade below."

While dial mottoes in the main are rather solemn,

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some strike a happy note. Decidedly cheerful are the lines by Richard Le Gallienne, which charming Cynthia in that dear old-furniture story, "The Face in the Girandole," by William Frederick Dix, chose for her dial:

"Shadow and sun;
So, too, our lives are made,
But ah! how great the sun,
How small the shade!"

Cynthia's dial was an old one, like everything in Cynthia's house.

An old garden affords the finest setting for a dial. The next best is a reproduction of an old garden. So clever are those wizards, the landscape-gardeners, that they reproduce everything but moss and mould, and these omissions the hand of Time will some day remedy. An old-fashioned garden full of larkspur, phlox, sweet-william, candytuft, spice-pinks, bleeding-hearts, and hollyhocks, with a prim hedge of box or privet, is the ideal setting for a Colonial dial—just as a formal garden with its architectural symmetry is the true background for a dial of carved bronze or marble. If the garden be of the latter type, the pedestal of the dial is well exposed. It

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is usually placed at the intersection of paths, or on a terrace, or plot of ground especially set apart for that purpose. The arrangement is formal, impressive, often beautiful, but seldom picturesque if we use the word "picturesque," as did Howells's *Altrurian Traveler*, to mean "charmingly irregular."

In the informal garden, where the irregular is sought rather than the orderly, the pedestal of the dial is often partially concealed by vines and low shrubs. It is seldom made the culminating point in the garden picture. You come upon it unexpectedly, possibly while thinking of roses—or something equally remote from time and eternity. Both gardens have their charm, but it is a difference of kind, not degree. We compare roses with roses—not roses with lilies, nor violets with chrysanthemums.

The English garden more than the Italian appeals most to Americans. The feeling is inborn, perhaps. The Italian, much as we may admire it, strikes a less responsive chord. The Elizabethan garden—the type Shakespeare knew—how we love its walled privacy, its hedges, its secluded walks, its orderly flower-beds, and its sun-dial. In such a garden Amy Robsart, the ill-fated heroine of *Kenilworth*, had a trysting-place with Robert Dudley,

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Earl of Leicester. In such a garden must Elizabeth have met this same nobleman, and that other Robert of her fancy, the Earl of Essex. Gardens held strange secrets then; some fair, others darker than the shadow on the dial-plate.

The garden should determine the style of the dial, unless one first has the dial and builds the garden around it. More than one Colonial dining-room has been built around a sideboard; and given an old dial, there is no reason why one should not grow the garden to match. If the pedestal of the dial is a simple granite or stone shaft, its somewhat severe lines will need the softening influence of vines, and its natural place will be in a simple garden, where a love of flowers and a love of work are factors, rather than money and the skill of a landscape designer.

Many modest gardens are now adorned with sundials, and the day may come when the old shadow-clock will be as much a necessity outside the house as the most approved timekeeper is within. Then the art of dialing will be revived, and craftsmen will have something new to show in metal work.

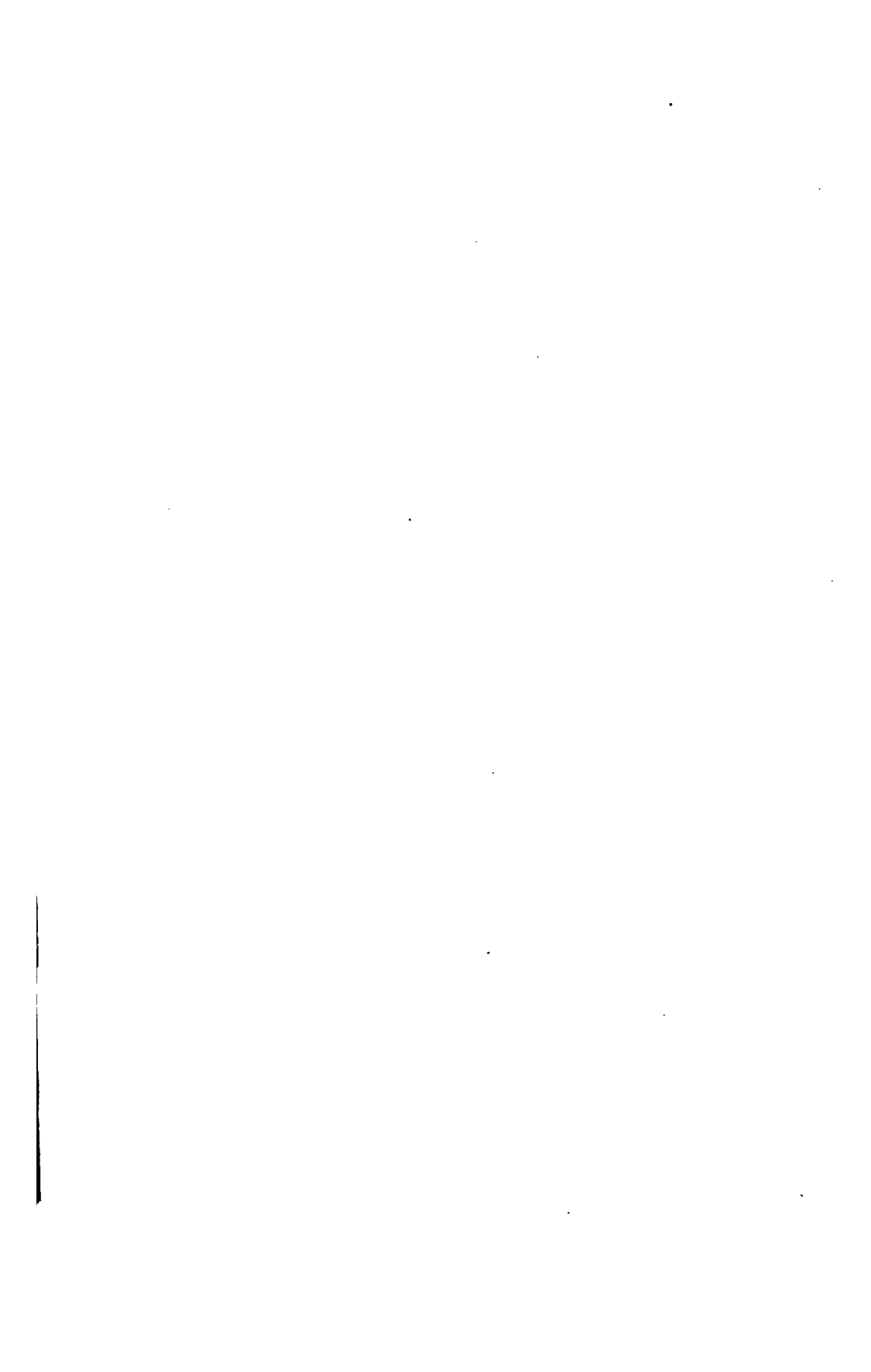
What the sun-dial was to the garden, the hour-glass was to the parlor of the house. Long after clocks were in general use, the glass with its shining



In a formal garden, Beverly, Mass.



Vertical dial with the hour-glass of time and the lamp of knowledge



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sand continued to be in favor. Sometimes the frame was of metal, but more often it was of wood, and devoid of ornament. According to one old writer, "The sand-glass should consist of an upper and lower bulb, united at the neck by a collar, and held in a mount or frame, formed by two discs. The sand should be fine, and of a reddish variety."

The origin of the hour-glass is obscure. It is generally believed to antedate the time of St. Jerome, who lived in the fourth century. Most of the old paintings and prints of this saint show the hour-glass. In the well known picture of Jerome by Hans Kelle, the artist spoiled the setting by introducing a clock unknown before the fifteenth century. The details of the picture are evidently those with which Kelle was familiar, and are typical of his time rather than that of St. Jerome.

Old English church records make frequent mention of the hour-glass. In Christ Church, Aldgate, is an account-book with this entry over the date, 1564: "Paid for an hour-glass that hangeth by the pulpit, when the preacher maketh a sermon, that he may know how the hour passes away, eight shillings." In a few New England churches the "meeting house hour-glass" is still preserved. Eager eyes must have followed the shifting sand in the old days

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of the Puritan Sabbath, for tradition hath it that the glass was turned three times before the sermon was completed. When shorter discourses became popular, hanging clocks were in use in the churches, and the hour-glass as a time-marker was no longer needed.

The house glass was of longer life, and survived until the nineteenth century was well under way. Few of these old timekeepers are now to be found and one must search long and far for even a fragment, unless one stumbles upon the old attic of the haunted house at Dorset.

Fashion has decreed a revival of the sun-dial, but there is little prospect of a renaissance of the hour-glass. In the complex life of the twentieth century the sand-glass has no part. Its days of usefulness are over, and it has passed into the catagory of a relic.

One modern poet has caught the old-time spirit of the shadow-clock, and added something new and beautiful of his own. The sun-dial at Yeddo, the country home of Spencer Trask, Esq., bears a verse written by Dr. Henry Van Dyke:

"Time is
Too slow for those who wait,
[564]

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Too swift for those who fear,
Too long for those who grieve,
Too short for those who rejoice,
But for those who love,
Time is
Eternity."



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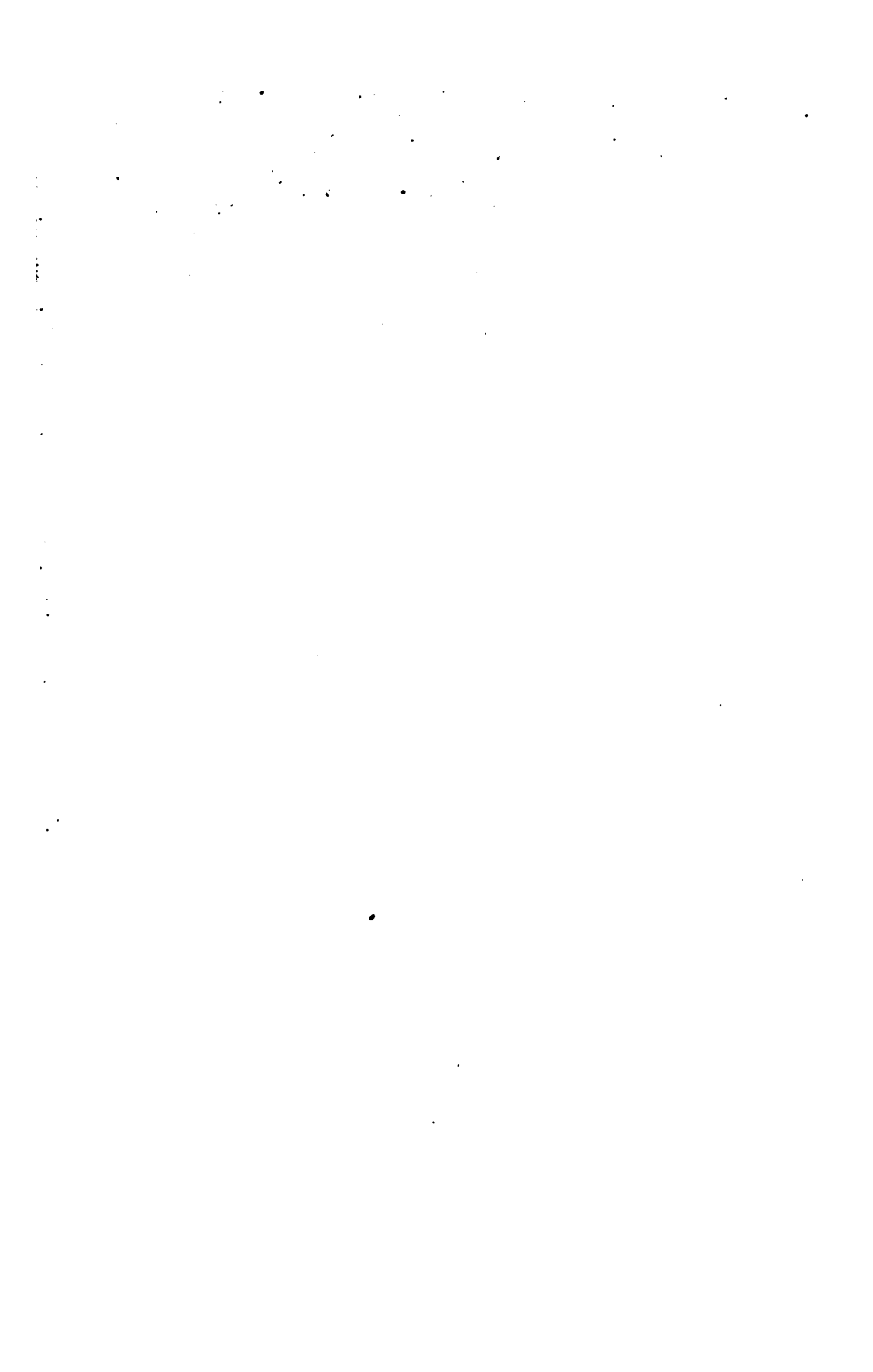
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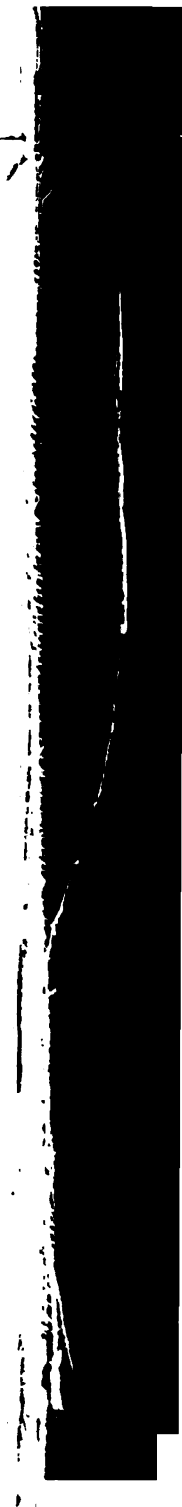


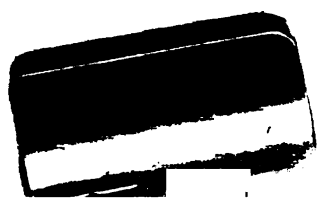
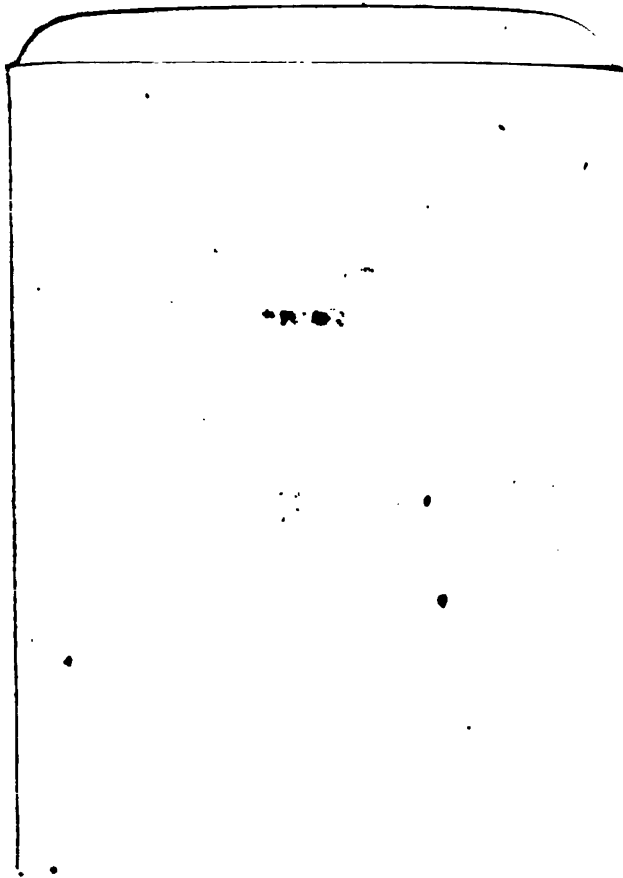
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